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A Peace Offering. 1857

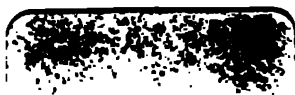


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A PEACE OFFERING:

OR,

A VIEW

OF THE

CAUSES OF DISCORD AND DIVISION,

AND

THEIR REMEDY.

"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

1857.



*John C. Allen.  
Dec 17<sup>th</sup> 1856.*

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## INTRODUCTION.

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HOWEVER desultory the following communication may appear, being, in great measure, made up of extracts from various authors, taken at different times, it is hoped that the chief aim of it may not be misunderstood, which is, to encourage Christian charity, righteous judgment, and the exercise of that faith which works by love to the purifying of the heart from all its evil lusts and affections; that it may become the abode of the Prince of Peace; whereby we may become united in the one Spirit, to the one and only Head of that spiritual body, of which we are professing to be members; looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, turning our backs upon all creaturely dependence, and becoming wholly subject to the will and direction of Truth, under a feeling of our own impotency; of our utter inability to perform any good word or work without the direction and help of Him who "maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flaming fire;" who maketh the clouds his chariot, and the wind his steeds; whose way is through thick darkness, and behold he cometh quickly, having his reward with Him—death as the wages of sin, and eternal life as the recompense for a patient continuance in well-doing—saying of the unjust, let him be unjust still, and of the righteous, let him be righteous still.



## A P E A C E O F F E R I N G.

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IF I have a right view of the *immediate* occasion of the trials and difficulties in which we, as a people, have become involved, it has been, on the one hand, the undertaking to set forth, as the views of the Society of Friends (however undesignedly or ignorantly this may have been done), religious sentiments which never have been, and never can be acknowledged by the true followers of Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; who are not conformed to this world, but are transformed by the renewing of their minds, whereby they are enabled to prove what is that good, perfect, and acceptable will of God; and, on the other, the endeavor to resist and controvert these sorrowful innovations upon the doctrines of the Society, in an *uncharitable, unforgiving, and unforgiving* spirit, being exercised by a zeal which is not according to the knowledge which the Lord alone can give, respecting his truth, and the right means of promoting it.

Through the prevalence of impatience, personal and party prejudice, and jealousy, "the hottest friends of Truth have done her deadliest wrong," by striving hastily and unlawfully against error; not willing to defer judgment until the appointed time when the secrets of the heart shall be revealed by the great Master, and Judge of us all, who alone can bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and open both the mysteries of godliness and iniquity; not willing to seek the counsel, and follow the direction of Truth, casting our burden upon the Lord, who is the head of his own body, the

Church, but preferring to work in our own way, wills, and time, in order to accomplish a desirable end; wherefore, these labors have not, and will not be crowned, though the testimony may and will eventually prevail, through the means appointed by Divine wisdom.

The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, writes, that "if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God. When ye came together in the Church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it; for there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you." The term heresy signifies, in general, a sect or choice, and in this sense it is used by Paul, who testified that after the most straitest sect or heresy, he lived a Pharisee; but most generally it is taken in a bad sense, for some fundamental error in religion, adhered to with obstinacy. The Apostle enumerates heresies among the works of the flesh, saying, "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, *lasciviousness*, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, &c.; of the which, I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do *such* things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

"It is not simply and absolutely necessary that there should be schisms and divisions in the Church; but God hath permitted Satan to show his malice, and men to discover the lusts and corruptions of their nature, by causing such divisions, that the sincerity of his people may be tried and known by their steadfastness to the Truth, and opposition to *those* corruptions." And it is by these that our foundations *are* being tried; and blessed are they who shall be enabled to stand upon the true Gospel ground, keeping their habitations in the Truth. It is not so much from errors in doctrine, brought in by a very few, as it is from a general lapse from primitive faith and purity, found in the many amongst us, as evinced by departures in practice from the righteous law of God written within, that we are so perplexed and

divided; and vain will be our plea, as the sons and daughters of Adam, that the forbidden fruit has been handed to us by one or more who has been beguiled by the serpent to partake thereof; in vain shall we plead the errors of others, as an excuse for our own; for the grace of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us what we should do, and what we should leave undone; and this is not only our teacher, but our helper in the great work of faith and self-denial. And if we were only attentive "to the still small voice" of the Spirit of Truth in *our own hearts*, and resolved to follow its teachings and leadings, neither the light in which error is clearly seen, nor the life in which it is sensibly felt, would be wanting; for God hath, in these last days, spoken unto us by his Son, who is *the way, the truth, and the life*, and His life is the light of men; our Mediator and Intercessor with the Father, presenting our petitions unto Him, our great King and Judge, who hath appointed his dear Son to be our only door of entrance into the true sheep-fold, counting all those who shall seek to climb up any other way, as thieves and robbers; for he *will* have the glory of our salvation, and will *not* give it to another, nor his praise to graven images.

Many, who, with the writer, have been made sensible of precipitancy and error in judgment, and impatience in waiting upon Him who seeth the end from the beginning, and can "turn the hearts of his people, as a man turneth a water-course in his field," can doubtless, in humility, acknowledge the discovery of their error, and the experience of confusion and shame, in view of the folly and danger in attempting the work of the Lord in our own wisdom and strength, thinking to hasten the progress of reformation by a hasty, an unforbearing and inconsiderate course of accusation and defamation—whereby judgment has been turned away backward—rather than by trusting in, and cleaving unto Him who is long-forbearing, long-suffering, and of tender mercy and compassion—seeking to admonish and restore the erring, in the spirit of meekness and love.

It is much easier, and more in accordance with human

nature, or the spirit of the world, to be found railing against individuals and bodies of men, because of error in faith or practice, than to seek, in the meekness and kindness of Christian love, to *restore* them to faithfulness, by *private, impartial, and forbearing* labor, in the authority of Truth. And it is because of this, that the baneful practice of defamation has been so generally resorted to, and *encouraged*, throughout the length and breadth of Society—under the specious covering of a good profession, and outward conformity to simplicity and plainness in dress and language—to the destruction of the precious bond of our once happy union.

“Such are the fruits of sanctimonious pride,  
Of malice fed while flesh is mortified.  
We slight the precious *kernel* of the stone,  
And toil to polish the rough *coat* alone;  
So sophistry cleaves close to, and protects  
Sin’s rotten trunk, concealing its defects.  
Thus men go wrong with an ingenious skill;  
Bend the *straight rule* to *their own crooked will*,  
And with a clear and shining lamp supplied,  
First put it out, then take it for a guide.  
By what unseen and unsuspected arts,  
The serpent *error* twines round human hearts.  
The poisonous, black, insinuating worm  
Successfully conceals her loathsome form,  
As creeping ivy clings to wood and stone,  
And hides the ruin that it feeds upon.  
Not all, whose eloquence the fancy fills,  
Musical as the chime of tinkling rills,  
Weak to perform, though mighty to pretend,  
Can trace her mazy windings to the end;  
Discern the fraud beneath the specious lure,  
Prevent the danger, or prescribe the cure.”

The object of our being brought together, as a religious Society, seems very much to have been overlooked or forgotten, during the progress of the difficulty in which we are now so reproachfully involved. We seem to have lost sight, in a great measure, of the obligation we *are* under to the great Head of the Church, and one to another, to “bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ;” to be one another’s helpers in Him, of whose body we are professing

to be members, united together by his Spirit, which is of love and good-will to men; without which, we are none of his, whatever our profession or attainments may be. As an evidence of this, has been our willingness and endeavors, *unnecessarily* to expose the failings and weaknesses one of another, in order to bring those we have esteemed offenders, on account of a difference of sentiment, respecting the means and manner of supporting our Christian testimonies, and the discipline of the Church, under the cruel power of unauthorized and unmitigated censure and reproach.

By their *fruits* shall the true followers of Christ ever be known, and "the fruit of the Spirit is *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*; against such there is no law." "And," says the Apostle, "if we live in the Spirit, let us *also walk* in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, *provoking* one another, *envying* one another." The truly devoted and humble Christian, regards the whole creation of mankind as one family, for whose good he is bound to labor, so far as he is qualified and enabled, without respect of persons or parties; for as Christ died for the whole world, even for the ungodly, so we should lay down our lives for the brethren; for, said our blessed Redeemer, "whosoever will lose his life, for my sake, the same shall save it."

But if we are unwilling to suffer with Christ, we shall not be permitted to reign with Him. And let us remember the manner of his suffering, how that he *endured* the contradiction of sinners, and the reproaches of self-righteous men who accused him, because of the manifestation of his love for all mankind, by condescending to mingle with publicans and sinners, whose salvation he was engaged to seek. His love knew and knows no bounds, and as this is shed abroad in our hearts, we shall experience the narrowness of worldly prudence and religious bigotry to be exchanged for a universal regard for the good and salvation of souls, without respect to nation, sect, or party.

With this general view of our failings and duties, I feel a freedom to enter a little into a particular account of the rise



and progress of the troubles of Society; and to give, in as few words as I may be favored to do it, the views which have found place in my mind, respecting the separations which have taken place, beginning with that which occurred in New England, of which I was a witness.

Convincing evidence was afforded that this was an uncalled for and an unrighteous act, both by the manner of its consummation, and its fruits; brought about by the exercise of the will and wisdom of those immediately concerned; and through the unwarrantable intervention of individuals, beyond the limits of the body of which the contending parties were members, which imposed an insurmountable barrier to their much-desired reconciliation; for the labors of those at a distance were of such a nature as to increase rather than diminish the feeling of disaffection, to confirm rather than condemn the indulgence in accusation and defamation, and to encourage the spirit of insubordination, through the exercise of which the rent in the body was effected.

How much better, I have thought, would it have been for those who sympathized with, and encouraged this spirit of insubordination, to have recommended a patient continuance in suffering, until it should have pleased the great Head of the Church to have opened the way for effectual help and deliverance; casting their burden upon the Lord, who *will* sustain and help all those whose trust and confidence are in Him alone. Then might the language, addressed by the blessed Master to his disciples, have been applicable unto them, "*ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.*"

But there was, during the progress of the sorrowful difficulty, which has brought so much trouble upon Society, evidently an unlawful strife for mastery, which has not been, and will not be crowned, even as there was a strife among the twelve disciples, which of them should be accounted the greatest; when "Jesus said unto them, the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise lordship upon them are called Benefactors. But *ye shall not be so*: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the

younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve; for whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? But I am among you as he that serveth."

This is a lesson of humility, taught by Him who was meek and lowly in heart, which, it is to be feared, we, as a people, have not fully learned; but which the blessed Master is seeking to teach us by the use of the chastening rod.—As we have chosen our own way and means of promoting his truth, he is permitting us to behold and suffer the end of wresting the work from his hands; by which the name of our profession has been brought under suffering and reproach, and the cause of truth and righteousness received a wound from which it will not soon recover, and never, except through an individual return to first principles—to the exercise of that faith which works by love to the purifying of the heart, enabling us to "lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil-speakings," and to refrain from accusing, judging, and condemning one another, in the spirit of wrath.

The separation in New England Yearly Meeting opened the way for others, several of which have already occurred; the occasion of which is traceable to that; and unless there is found a willingness in our hearts to bear and forbear, to concede and suffer, there will be a succession of these mournful occurrences, to the further and lasting reproach of our high and holy profession. Let us all, then, be willing to suffer wrong, rather than do wrong; for the Divine blessing will attend us, if a disposition like this is maintained and cherished, for the sake of that peace which no earthly power, profession, or attainment can confer upon us. Let us be willing to suffer the mortification of our own wills, rather than to seek them at the sacrifice of the peace, unity, and harmony of the Church; for as we continue patient and faithful, trusting in the mighty power of Truth, it *will* eventually triumph over all.

As the separations which have occurred have been brought about by the departures of individuals, upon the right hand as well as upon the left, the restoration and preservation of

the body can only be effected through *individual faithfulness*. And when we consider the loss which has been sustained by the Church through envy, contention, and strife, how can any, who regard its present and future welfare, be found listening to, and following the voice of the enemy of all truth, peace, and righteousness, who fain would persuade us that our salvation is dependent upon contentions, hatred, and divisions.

O let us be willing to work on, and to suffer on, rather than divide and separate; patiently waiting for the triumph of Truth, which *will* eventually prevail, though many may forsake it. Let us seek to keep with the body, whatever it may cost us; and, as faithful members of it, strive to bear hardness as good soldiers, not being offered in Him by whom, and with whom, we are called to suffer contradictions, revilings, and persecutions, for righteousness sake. "Blessed," said He, "are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you *falsely* for my name's sake."

"Behold," said our blessed Master to his disciples, "I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Those who are on the side of love and mercy, patience and forbearance, must expect to suffer at the hands of those whose time is always ready to reproach, rebuke, and punish; and great will be our reward if we suffer patiently for *well-doing*, not returning railing for railing, but rather good for evil, blessing them that persecute us, and praying for those by whom we are evilly entreated; for unto this are we called; and nothing but a blind zeal, such as was exercised by the holy apostle before his conversion, can lead us to desire a continuance of our present state of unsettlement and confusion, brought about through a disregard of the law of the new covenant, which teacheth better things than the blood of Abel, causing us to feel for the affliction of Joseph.

All the separations which have ever occurred in the Society, *have* been the work of the evil one, in the mystery of iniquity; and though I have freely sympathized with those, who, while

believing themselves bound to the law and the testimony of Truth, have left the bodies of which they were members, yet I have been unable to perceive the ground of their justification in thus doing, either in the benefit which they themselves, or the Society at large, can expect to realize from this fruit of disaffection and insubordination; for surely, if the Society is degenerating, it has so much the more need of faithful members, who are engaged to labor, in the faith and patience of the saints, for its restoration and preservation.

And if members, thus concerned, were preserved in the right spirit; in the meekness and humility of the blessed Master, who testified that he came not to condemn the world, but to save it; not to do his own will, but that of his Father in heaven, it is confidently believed that they would be made willing and able to suffer greater trials than have yet fallen to our lot, without leaving the flock, because of the approach or presence of the evil one, who is seeking to scatter and destroy; but, by keeping near to the great Shepherd of the sheep, and, instead of being offended in Him, because of his leadings into suffering and reproach for his name's sake, they would experience the extension of the crook of his love, for their embrace, as the instruments of his protecting and gathering power, as the delegated Shepherds of his flock.

He is the good Shepherd who careth for the sheep, and hath given his life for them; "but," said He, "he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth *not* for the sheep. I am the good Shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine. And other sheep I have which are not of *this* fold; *them also* I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

If he could acknowledge those as his sheep who knew him not, and condescend to bring them to the hearing of his voice, can we, as his followers and instruments, refuse to stretch forth our hands for their help, in order that they may be brought into the *one* fold of the *one* Shepherd? Shall

the disciple be greater than his Lord, or the servant than his Master? Shall the wisdom and way of the world be preferred before the wisdom and way of truth, but at our peril? "Woe unto them that take counsel but not of me," saith the Lord; "that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit."

Unless the wisdom from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy, is our guide and government, vain will be our hope of happiness and peace, or for the salvation of our souls; for which the Prince of Peace gave his precious life, being willing to be counted among transgressors, and suffer an ignominious death at the hands of wicked and cruel men, rather than cease to labor for the good of souls; for the recovery of those who, through transgression, had fallen from the state of purity in which we were originally created.

"O 'tis a godlike privilege to save,  
And he that scorns it is himself a slave :  
'Beauty for ashes' is a gift indeed,  
And slaves, by truth enlarged, are doubly freed."

Having been a member of two bodies in which separations have occurred, and one in which another has long seemed to threaten, and having been deeply exercised on account of the sorrowful condition of the body at large, I can freely sympathize with those who are called and disposed, to stand in the breach as testimony-bearers *against* the spirit of separation, as a fruit of the forbidden tree, whose taste is death to the principles of our profession; death to the power, love, and mercy of the gospel in our souls, to the exercise of which we are called, and which were experienced and cherished in the hearts of the primitive believers, enabling them freely to sacrifice their own wills, outward liberty, possessions, and even their outward lives, rather than offend their divine Master, or do anything which might cause a brother to offend, even though the act, in itself considered, or so far as they themselves were concerned, might be lawful.

The endeavor to *force* others into the adoption of our views, however correct they may be, will ever be attended

with harm. Men may be persuaded and led, but cannot be driven without producing a feeling of opposition, a spirit of resentment and resistance, for the evils of which those who endeavor to coerce them by accusation, threats, and defamation are in great measure responsible. The power of the Gospel is gentle, convincing, and persuasive, and *taketh its kingdom by entreaty, and not by force*, of which the holy Apostle was convinced, when the scales of ignorance had been removed from his eyes, for he had been exercised by a blind zeal, in persecuting the Church, thinking that God was served by his intolerance and violence.

But when his eyes were *marvellously* opened, to behold the evil of his doings, his course was *immediately and entirely changed*, and he was led to declare respecting himself and his fellow-disciples, that, "having known the terror of the Lord for sin, therefore we *persuade* men." And how many of us have been actuated by the same spirit by which Paul was led, before his miraculous conversion, "thinking we should do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth," which things we have done, judging, condemning, and persecuting those who have differed from us, in opposition to the divine injunction to "overcome evil with good," returning good for evil, and submitting ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, and thereby silencing the ignorance of the foolish, who think to prevail by violence and cruelty; for it is the will of God that we should commit our souls unto him in *well-doing*, that those who speak against us, as evil-doers, may by our good works, which they shall behold, glorify him in the day of visitation.

"With an [endeavor]  
Gentle, and affable, and full of grace,  
As fearful of offending whom we wish  
Much to persuade, his ear should be plied with truth;  
Not *harshly* thundered forth, or *rudely* pressed,  
But like our purpose, *gracious, kind, and sweet*,  
Lest enraged the more, by what might have reformed,  
He seek destruction with a zeal to be destroyed.  
Mercy to him that shows it, *is* the rule  
And righteous *limitation* of its act,

By which Heaven moves in pard'ning guilty man,  
 And he that shows none, being ripe in years,  
 And conscious of the outrage he commits,  
 Shall seek it, and *not* find it, in his turn."

O let us be willing to become fools for Christ's sake, even as the holy Apostles, of whom Paul testified, that, "Being reviled, we *bless* ; being persecuted, we *suffer* it ; being defamed, we *entreat* ; we are made as the filth of the earth, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." And further on in his Epistle to the Corinthians, he says, "there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong ? why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves* to be defrauded?"

Now is not the meaning of the Apostle applicable to us in this day, and can we go to law one with another, and not be in fault ? Can those who are recognized as members of "the body at large" be allowed to prosecute others, whose title is *at least* as good as theirs to this recognition, without rebuke from those by whom they are acknowledged ? Can this be done without a forfeiture of their claim to being the true and irreproachable followers of those who were the companions of Christ ? With whatever else this may harmonize, it is against all common understanding of the teachings and leadings of the Spirit of Christ ; and not this alone, but many other irregularities which might be named, into which those, or many of those, who have espoused a *good cause* in a wrong spirit, have been led, in the course of their proceedings against those from whom they are separated, and who they contend are unsound in the faith.

It is the hope of the writer ever to be preserved from a party spirit, and to be enabled to look with candor and charity upon both sides of every question in which the Truth is concerned. And I am persuaded in my own mind, that neither of the two parties immediately concerned in the present difficulty in Society, can claim entire exemption from error and blame, any more than those who have been their respective sympathizers. And it seems a shameful reproach to our profession that the testimonies which we are called to sup-

port, cannot be upheld without a resort to violence and misrepresentation, crimination and recrimination, personal attack and personal resistance, and an indulgence in the spirit of malice, envy, and jealousy, which is so inconsistent with our profession of friendship for the Truth.

"No friendship will abide the test,  
That stands on sordid interest,  
Or *mean self-love* erected ;  
Nor such as may a while subsist,  
Between the [zealot and partialist],  
For vicious ends connected.

Whoever keeps an open ear  
For tattlers, will be sure to hear  
The trumpet of contention ;  
Aspersions is the babblers' trade,  
To listen is to lend him aid,  
And rush into dissension.

A fretful temper will divide  
The closest knot that may be tied,  
By ceaseless sharp corrosion ;  
A temper passionate and fierce  
May suddenly your joys disperse,  
At one immense explosion.

A friendship, that in frequent fits  
Of controversial rage emits  
The sparks of disputation,  
Like hand in hand insurance plates,  
Most unavoidably creates  
The thought of conflagration.

Religion should extinguish strife,  
And make a calm of human life :  
But friends that chance to differ  
On points, which God has left at large,  
How freely will they meet and charge !  
No combatants are *stiffer*.

The noblest friendship ever shown,  
The Saviour's history makes known,  
Though some have turned and turned it ;  
And whether crazed or blind,  
Or seeking with a biassed mind,  
Have not, it seems, discerned it."



" 'Tis hard, indeed, if nothing will defend  
 Mankind from quarrels but their fatal end ;  
 That, now and then, a hero must de cease,  
 That the surviving world may live in peace."

But, notwithstanding all that has occurred, it is encouraging to believe, that there are those amongst us who are sufficiently gifted with the spirit of true discernment, to see that, in the hands of the professors of the Christian name, the cruel sword of persecution can never advance the cause of truth and righteousness, and that it must be returned to its scabbard, before unity and peace can ever be restored amongst us. It is confidently hoped, and believed, that true wisdom will again be justified, and her children multiplied, until strife and contention, fightings and divisions, shall be brought to an effectual end; and the tokens for good have already appeared amongst us; therefore, let not the good work by any means be marred, lest we lose the promised reward, and continue to have sorrow upon sorrow.

" Hearts may be found, that harbor at this hour,  
 That love of Christ, and all its quickening power,  
 And lips *unstained by folly or by strife*,  
 Whose wisdom, drawn from the deep well of life,  
 Tastes of its healthful origin, and flows  
 A Jordan for the ablution of our woes ;  
 Whose souls drawn upward in communion sweet  
 Enjoy the stillness of their blest retreat,  
 Discourse, as if released and safe at home,  
 Of dangers past, and wonders yet to come,  
 And spread the sacred treasure of the breast,  
 Upon the lap of covenanted rest.  
 Miné be the friend, though constant in his prayers,  
 Who makes no bustle with his soul's affairs,  
 Who still remembers, if he seeks to please,  
 To press his point with *modesty and ease*,  
 Without the clash of arguments and jar of words,  
 Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,  
 Which decide no question with their tedious length,  
 As opposition gives opinion strength."

The ranks of the over-zealous extremist, who are satisfied with nothing short of everything, have evidently been thinned

out, to the increase of the number of those who have been made willing to "stand in the gap before the Lord, for the land, that he should not destroy it, pouring out his indignation upon us, and consuming us with the fire of his wrath, recompensing *our own way* upon our heads." There is an evident increase of moderation and Christian charity amongst us, which, it is to be hoped, may continue to go on, until we are brought together again into that unity and harmony which so signally prevailed amongst us, in days that are past.

If there should happily be found strength in the undivided bodies in Society sufficient to hold them together, may we not hope for a reunion of those which are now divided? those in which the will and wisdom of the creature *have* prevailed in frustrating the design of the great Head of the Church in bringing us together—that we might be a united and *peculiar people, zealous of good works*—and this by a departure from the love and order of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath directed that in case of offences against the Truth, or against us, offenders should be privately labored with, and that we should forgive, as we would wish to be forgiven; for if we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our heavenly Father forgive ours.

When we consider the many irregularities and inconsistencies which have marked the way of those who have professed to be standing and contending for the faith, and, under this profession, have set up a separate organization, out of the order of truth, denying the legitimacy of the body from which they have been disowned, and to which they appealed for their right of membership, how can we fail to see and acknowledge that a good cause has suffered in the hands of its over-zealous advocates, involving the whole Society in trial difficulty?

It has been asserted and is believed, that if the testimony against wrong things had been more forbearingly and regularly borne, it would have found a larger and more availing support. But alas! judgment has been turned away backward, through the exercise of impatience and lordship; a determination strengthened by foreign influence, to gain the

ascendency and mastery, which frustrated the end aimed at; leading into an unlawful strife for dominion, which failed of the crown that awaits the exercise of righteousness.

“Where men of judgment creep and feel their way,  
The *positive* pronounce without dismay;  
Where others toil with [investigating] force,  
Their *hasty* minds take a shorter course,  
Fling at your head conviction in the lump,  
And gain remote conclusions at a jump.”

Having been present at the Yearly Meeting in which this first separation occurred, participating according to my measure in the exercises of it, I feel free to testify to the resting of a cloud over the meeting, during the time that preceded the separation, which was removed at the departure of those who had stood as its accusers, which was succeeded by a solemn quiet, and a savory and comforting testimony, borne by a Gospel messenger from a foreign land, who was tenderly affected by the sorrowful departure of those who had taken it upon themselves to rebuke, punish, and annul the body which they had left.

This is an occurrence which will long be remembered, by those who were witnesses to it; and I should hope never to behold another of a similar kind, as the precedent was a painful one, and will, I believe, be found unsafe to follow, let the pretext be what it may. We had much better continue to suffer with the body of which we are members, than to separate from it, for in due time deliverance will be wrought *for* us, if we continue patiently to bear our trials, without being offended in Him who hath ever chosen his people in the furnace of affliction.

Our remedy for suffering and trial will not be found in separations, but will only be increased by them, as has been seen in the effect of those which have already occurred; but our duty, comfort, safety, and hope, consist in abiding with the blessed Master in his temptations; for if we suffer with him we shall also be permitted to reign with him. He is the head of his body, the Church, and we, as members of it, are bound to suffer with it for his sake, bearing hardness as good

soldiers, exercising that charity which endureth all things, hopeth all things, believeth all things, and never faileth.

It is to be hoped that "the salutary influence of time" may have been felt by many amongst us, in doing away with the baneful tendency of pride, prejudice, and bigotry, which have stood as barriers in the way of our reconciliation one with another, for we have had convincing evidence that we may err both in spirit and practice, even while holding and contending for correct religious views. An acknowledgment of the truth of the letter, a plain appearance, and a strict attention to all the outward forms of religion, are wholly inadequate to the constitution of a true Christian, or a consistent Quaker, as we have abundantly witnessed.

A fair outside often covers a wicked and rebellious heart, in which the feeling of bitterness hath taken deep root, by the springing up of which we have been troubled, and many have been defiled : so that we must look below the surface for the true character of the man ; for the heart is a fountain which containeth either sweet waters or bitter, and it is according to the quality of these that we are to be judged, for God looketh at the heart, and judgeth us according to the thoughts and intents thereof ; for this is the spring either of good or evil ; the temple of worship, the house of prayer, " or a den of thieves, a cage of unclean birds."

Many have been deceived and misled in judging by the sight of the eye, and the hearing of the ear, to the justifying of the guilty, and condemning of the innocent, regarding all as gold that glitters, and that impure, which to the natural senses was uncomely. But the great Head of the Church is not, and cannot be deceived, for he knoweth them that are his, and he is known and served by them, however hidden their labors of love may be ; for he witnesseth their sorrows, and heareth their prayers, and in his own time he changeth the dispensations of his wisdom, giving them the oil of joy for mourning, and for the spirit of heaviness, the garment of praise.

" Religious force divine is best displayed  
In deep desertion of all human aid.

To succor in *extremes* is her delight,  
 And cheer the heart when terror strikes the sight.  
 Against her cares is raised a dauntless mind,  
 And with an ardent heart, but most resigned.  
 Deep in the dreadful gloom, with pious heat,  
 Amid the silence of her dark retreat,  
 Her God 's addressed—' Almighty Power Divine!  
 'Tis thine to raise ; and to depress, is thine ;  
 With honor to light up the name unknown,  
 Or to put out the lustre of a throne.'  
 Those we call *wretched* are a chosen band,  
 Compelled to refuge in the *right*, for peace.  
 In every storm, that either frowns, or falls,  
 What an asylum has the soul in prayer!  
 And [affliction's hour], what a fane is this in which to pray!  
 A *good man*, seen, though silent, counsel gives ;  
 The touched spectator wishes to be wise :  
 In a bright mirror His own hands have made,  
*Here* we see something like the face of God.  
 Man's angry heart, *inspected*, would be found  
 As rightly set as the starry spheres ;  
 'Tis [Truth's commandments] broken by *stubborn will*  
 Breeds all that uncelestial discord there.  
 Our *faults* are at the bottom of our pains ;  
 Error, in *acts*, or *judgment*, is the source  
 Of endless sighs. We *sin*, or we *mistake* ;  
 And *nature* tax when *false opinion* stings."

The secret prayers of the righteous are heard in heaven and answered on earth, and it is from these that the heart derives its strength, comfort, and hope, by which it is enabled to withstand the power of temptation, and to continue in the faith and patience of the saints, while the winds and waves thereof are threatening to overwhelm and destroy the tempest-tossed vessel. To the humble, devout, and prayerful soul, there will be heard in the midst of the fearful storm, "a still small voice," in the secret thereof, saying, "Fear not, for I am with thee."

If, in the midst of our trials, we, as a people, had been more fervently engaged in seeking unto the Lord for direction, comfort, and help, and less disposed to lean to our own understandings, following the direction of our own wills and wisdom, turning our backs upon the *secret* reproofs of in-

struction, we should have witnessed less of the sorrow and confusion in which we have been involved. But alas! for us, we have been wiser than Him whom we have professed for our Leader and Head, and, through the subtlety of the serpent, have been beguiled into self-righteousness, and an unenlightened and intemperate zeal, whereby the Truth of our profession has been made to suffer.

How has the precious bond of perfectness, which is the end of the commandment, been broken, by the endeavor to promote a good end, by wrong means—to stay the overflowing scourge of evil, in the wrath and will of man, by bitter reflections and cruel defamation, which have brought down the judgment of the Almighty upon us, causing us to bewail our divided and sorrowful condition, in which we are made to see the error of our doings, and to feel the pain of a just retribution. How has the greatest of all virtues been mocked and derided, as the child of weakness, and the advocate of error, until many have been made to believe that their peace and salvation depend upon the exercise of austerity and severity.

But let us no longer be deceived by the father of lies, who fain would persuade us that the love and mercy of the Gospel; which seek to heal and restore, to “bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound, and to comfort all that mourn;” stand opposed to the work of reformation, and that it is by violence and cruelty that we are to prevail in effecting the work of Truth; for,

“All zeal for a reform that gives offence  
To peace and charity, *is mere pretence*;  
A bold remark, but which, if well applied,  
Would humble many a towering [zealot's] pride.  
No works shall find acceptance in that day,  
When all *disguises* shall be rent away,  
That square not truly with the Scripture plan,  
Nor spring from love to God, or love to man.  
True charity, a plant divinely nursed,  
Fed by the love from which it rose at first,  
Thrives against hope, and, in the rudest scene,  
Storms but enliven its unfading green;

Though scorn repay her sympathetic tears,  
 She still is kind, and still she perseveres ;  
 The truth she loves, a sightless world blaspheme,  
 'Tis childish dotage, a delirious dream.  
 The danger they discern not, they deny ;  
 Laugh at their *only* remedy, and die.  
 But still a soul thus touched can *never* cease,  
 Whoever threatens war, to speak of peace.  
 Pure in her aim, and in her temper mild,  
 Her wisdom *seems* the weakness of a child :  
 She makes excuses when she might condemn,  
 Reviled by those that *hate* her, she *prays* for them ;  
 Suspicion lurks not in her artless breast,  
 The *worst* suggested, she believes the *best* ;  
 Not *soon* provoked, however stung and teased,  
 And, if perhaps made angry, *soon* appeased ;  
 She rather *waives* than *disputes* her right,  
 And, injured, makes *forgiveness* her delight.  
 Such was the portrait an apostle drew,  
 The bright original was one he knew,  
 Heaven held his hand, the likeness *must* be true.  
 When one, that holds communion with the skies,  
 Has filled his urn where *these pure waters* rise,  
 And once more mingles with us meaner things,  
 'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings ;  
 Immortal *fragrance* fills the circuit wide,  
 That tells us *whence* his treasures are supplied.  
 So when a ship, well freighted with the stores  
 The sun matures on India's spicy shores,  
 Has dropped her anchor, and her canvas furled  
 In some *safe* haven of our western world,  
 'Twere vain inquiry to what port she went,  
 The gale informs us, *laden* with the *scent*."

It is no uncommon error, to believe the end, if it be good,  
 will justify the use of evil means in its attainment ; therefore,  
 many have been betrayed into the fault of evil-speaking  
 against offenders in the Church, thinking within themselves,  
 that the Truth might be the gainer thereby, forgetting  
 that the aim and design thereof is to *reclaim* rather than *de-*  
*stroy* those who may be overtaken in a fault, and not remem-  
 bering themselves, lest they also be tempted. But the peace,  
 prosperity, and unity of the Church depend, *in great measure*,  
 upon the exercise of *tenderness* and *compassion* towards the

erring, who are entitled to protection from the tongue of slander, or defamation.

“Some seek, when queasy conscience has its qualms,  
To lull the painful malady with alms;  
But charity, *not* feigned, intends *alone*  
Another's good,—theirs centres in *their own*;  
They, most tender of *their own* good name,  
Are rather *careless* of a *brother's* fame,  
Their *superfluity* the poor supplies,  
But, if they *touch* a character, *it dies*.  
How many deeds with which the world has rung,  
From *pride* in league with ignorance have sprung.  
But God *o'errules* all human follies still,  
And bends the *tough* material to his will.  
Ambition, enchanted with the love of fame,  
Oft hath sought the jewel in *his neighbor's shame*;  
Unlike the soul that's kindled from above,  
Who spreads *wide* her arms of *universal love*;  
And, still enlarged as she receives the grace,  
Includes creation in her *close embrace*.”

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“In faith and hope the world *will* disagree,  
But all mankind's concerned in *charity*;  
All must be false that thwart this one *great end*;  
And all of God, that *bless* mankind, or mend.”

However much we may despise the name and exercise of charity, there is no other means by which we can advance the cause of our dear Redeemer, than by the exercise of the love, mercy, self-denial, and forbearance, of which He, when personally upon the earth, was our example. All other means shall utterly fail in promoting the coming of his kingdom in the earth; for the weapons of the Christian's warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan, and He is the author and fountain of the love which He requires of us, and by which his, dear Son was sent into the world, unresistingly and patiently to suffer for the sins of *the whole human family, without respect of persons*.

“The faithful friends of Christ, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and *inwardly* breathe that his kingdom may



come on earth as it is in heaven, are taught by Him to be quick of understanding in his fear, and to be very attentive to the means *He* may appoint for promoting *pure* righteousness in the earth ; and as shame *is* due to those whose works *manifestly operate against* the gracious design of his suffering for us, a care lives on their minds that wrong customs [or views], *however supported*, may not bias their judgments, but that they may humbly abide under the cross, and be preserved in a *conduct* which may not contribute to strengthen the hands of the wicked in their wickedness, or to remove shame from those to whom it is justly due. The coming of the day is precious, in which we experience the truth of the expression, ‘ *The Lord our righteousness*,’ and feel *Him* to be ‘ made unto us wisdom and sanctification.’

“When we love the Lord, with all our hearts, and his creatures in his love, we are then preserved in *tenderness toward all mankind* ; but if *another spirit*—[a party spirit]—gets room in our minds, and we follow it in our proceedings, we are in the way of disordering the affairs of Society. To keep to *right means* in laboring to attain a right end is necessary, and if, in striving to shun [evil and error, and to oppose the current of them] we strive only in *that state* where Christ *is* the light of our life, our labors will stand in the true harmony of Society ; but if people are confident that the end aimed at is good, and in this confidence pursue it so eagerly, as *not* to wait for the Spirit of Truth to lead them, then they come to loss,” and the Truth suffers by their folly and departure.

“When the end we have in view is most *unquestionably* good, we should take *most* heed that the means by which we seek to attain to it, are suitable ; because the better the end, the more liable are we to be cozened into the use of ill means to effect it ; we are apt, while with great earnestness of mind we gaze upon the end, not to care what course we pursue so as we attain it ; and are apt to think that God will overlook the miscarriage in our attempts, if the end be good ; because many, if not most times, the name and honor of Truth do more suffer by attempting a good end by bad means, than by attempting both a bad end, and also by bad means ; for

bad ends are suitable to bad means; they are alike. But the name, the nature, and the honor of God is written upon everything that is good, and the blemish that is cast upon it, is in some measure cast upon Him : and the evil, scandal, infamy and ugliness that is in the means used to promote it is cast upon the end, and doth disparage and blemish it, and consequently dishonors God."

And when we, as a people, look back upon the crooked paths in which we have walked, while professedly aiming at a good and justifiable end, can we marvel at the manifestation of Divine displeasure, under which we are now groaning? Can we wonder at the infliction of the scourge of confusion and divisions amongst us, when we remember how we have turned our backs upon the teachings and leadings of the Holy Spirit, by indulging in the spirit of contention and strife, under the profession of love to God and man, and of a desire to promote "peace on earth and good-will to men?" And can we expect the cloud of darkness, by which we have been overspread, to be removed, before we return unto Him whom we have forsaken and rebelled against; loving ourselves and ours more than Him, and his precious cause, and seeking our own wills, and following our own ways, to the reproach of the Christian name?

Our profession is a serious thing, and it becomes us to bear in mind the judgments pronounced upon hypocrisy, lest while the enemy is crying peace, peace, to our rebellious souls, sudden destruction be permitted to come upon us; lest while the rich are glorying in their riches, and the wise in their wisdom, the Lord shall see meet to chasten and humble us in his hot displeasure, because we have forgotten to glorify Him, and bring honor to his name; for it is written, "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God." If the end we have in view be the hastening of the coming of the kingdom of Christ in the earth, let the means be worthy of the end; let humility, self-denial, and charity reign in our hearts, and mark our ways.

"In the obedience of faith, we die to the *narrowness of self-love*, and our life being hid with Christ in God, our hearts are

enlarged toward *mankind universally*; but in departing from the light of life, many, in striving [after good] have stumbled upon the dark mountains. That purity of life which proceeds from *faithfulness in following the Spirit of Truth*, that state where our minds are devoted to serve God, and all our [desires and undertakings] are bounded by his wisdom, this habitation is as a place of retirement for the children of light, where we may stand separated from that which *disordereth* and *confuseth* the affairs of Society, and where we may have a testimony of our innocence in the hearts of those who behold us.

“True charity is an excellent virtue; and to labor sincerely for *their good*, whose belief, in all points, do *not* agree with ours, is a happy state. To be a fool as to the wisdom of this world, and *commit our cause to God*, not fearing to offend men who take offence at the simplicity of Truth, is the only way to remain *unmoved* at the sentiments of others. Deep humility is a strong bulwark; and as we enter into it, we find safety and true exaltation; the foolishness of God is wiser than man, and the weakness of God is stronger than man. Being unclothed of our own wisdom, and knowing the abasement of the creature therein, we find that power to arise, which gives health and vigor to us;” by which we are enabled, availingly, to espouse the blessed cause of Truth, promoting its advancement in the earth, according to the Divine will.

“Let us not forget that ‘the Most High hath his way in the deep, in clouds, and in thick darkness’—that it is his voice which crieth in our midst; and oh! that these loud and awakening cries may have a proper effect upon us, that heavier chastisements may not be necessary! For while a selfish spirit, that is *not* subject to the Cross of Christ, continueth to spread and prevail, there can be no long continuance in outward peace and tranquillity. If we desire an inheritance incorruptible, and to be at rest in a state of peace and happiness, which ever continues; if we desire, in this life, to dwell under the favor and protection of that Almighty Being, whose habitation is in holiness, whose ways are all

equal, and whose anger is *now* kindled, because of our backslidings; let us, then, awfully regard these beginnings of his sore judgments, and, with abasement and humility, turn to him whom we *have* offended.

“Contending with one equal in strength, is an easy exercise; but if the Lord becomes our enemy, if we persist to contend with Him who is infinite, our overthrow will be inevitable.

“When God and man stand opposite in view,  
Man's disappointment must of course ensue.  
But if led from earthly things to things divine,  
His creatures thwart *not* his [gracious] design,  
Then praise is heard instead of reasoning pride,  
And *captious cavil and complaint* subside.  
But grace abused brings forth the foulest deeds,  
As richest soil the most luxuriant weeds.  
Cured of the golden calves, our father's sin,  
We set up *self*, that idle god, within.

Man is the genuine offspring of revolt,  
Stubborn and sturdy, a wild ass's colt;  
His passions, like the wa'try stores that sleep  
Beneath the smiling surface of the deep,  
Wait but the lashes of a wintry storm  
To *frown* and roar, and shake his *feeble* form.  
Such stuff the world is made of; and mankind  
To passion, interest, pleasure, whim, resigned,  
Insists on, as if each were his own Pope,  
Forgiveness, and the privilege of hope.  
But when God arises with an awful frown  
To punish lust, or pluck presumption down;  
When gifts *perverted*, or not duly prized,  
Pleasure *o'ervalued*, and *his grace despised*,  
Provoke the vengeance of his righteous hand  
To pour down wrath upon a *thankless* land;  
He will be found too *impartially* severe,  
Too just to wink, or speak the *guilty* clear.”

Let us attentively consider whether a selfish zeal, begotten through a love of human praise, hath not been permitted to destroy the true substance of religion in our hearts, for which we have been sorely chastened, though not entirely delivered over to death, even as the royal Psalmist, who declared that he was greatly afflicted, and *said in his haste, All men are*

*liars*. When under outward suffering and reproach, how liable are we to revile and persecute those who have offended against us, taking the law and means of punishment into our own hands, even the returning of railing for railing, and accusation and persecution, for suffering.

“Those evils which a man cannot rectify, he ought to bear with *humble resignation*, till God shall be pleased to produce a change. If all men were perfect, we should meet with nothing in the conduct of others to suffer for the sake of God. But in the present fallen state of human nature, it is his blessed will that we should learn to ‘bear one another’s burdens;’ and as *no* man is free from some burden of sin or sorrow, the necessity of mutual forbearance, mutual consolation, mutual support, instruction, and advice, is founded upon our mutual imperfections, troubles, and wants. Besides, by outward occasions of suffering from the conduct of others, the nature and degree of every man’s *inward strength* is more plainly discovered; for outward occasions do not make him frail, but only show him what he is in himself.

“We generally judge of persons and things as they either oppose or gratify our private views and inclinations; and, blinded by *self-love*, are easily led from *the judgment of truth*. If God alone was the pure object of all our intentions and desires, we should *not* be troubled when the appearance of things happens to be repugnant to our own sentiments; but now, we are continually drawn aside from truth and peace, by some *partial* inclination lurking within, or some *apparent* good or evil rising without. Many, indeed, secretly seek themselves in all they do, and perceive it not. These, while the course of things perfectly coincides with the sentiments and wishes of their own hearts, *seem* to possess all the blessings of peace; but when their wishes are disappointed, and their sentiments opposed, they are immediately disturbed and become wretched.

“From *diversity* of inclinations and opinions *tenaciously adhered to*, arise *dissensions* among even the professors of a religious and holy life; but if thou adherest more to thy own reason, and thy own will, than to the *meek obedience* of

Jesus Christ, as the principle of all virtue within thee; thou wilt slowly, if ever, receive the illuminations of the Holy Spirit; for God expects an entire and absolute subjection of our wills to his; and that the flames of divine love should infinitely transcend the sublimest heights of human reason.

"Till *love* appear, we live in anxious doubt:  
 But smoke will vanish when *that* flame breaks out.  
 This is the fire that would consume our dross,  
 Refine and make us richer by the loss.  
 Could we *forbear dispute* and *practise love*,  
 We should agree as angels do above.  
 Where love presides, not vice alone does find  
 No entrance there, but virtues stay behind.  
 Both Faith and Hope, and all the meaner train  
 Of moral virtues [in the rear] remain;  
 Love enters [foremost] as a native there;  
 For, born in heaven, it does but sojourn here.  
 Weak though we are, to love is no hard task,  
 And love for love is all that Heaven does ask;  
 Love that would all men *just and temperate* make,  
 Kind to themselves and others, for *his* sake.  
 'Tis with our minds as with a fertile ground,  
 Wanting this love, they *must* with weeds abound:  
 Unruly passions, whose effects are worse  
 Than thorns and thistles, springing from the curse."

"The man who is influenced by Christian love and moderation, is temperate in his wishes and pursuits, both of these being regulated by the will of his heavenly Father, whom he is engaged above all to serve and worship, as the supreme object of his adoration and praise. A good conscience is to him more valuable than any success, for he is not so much bent on the accomplishment of any design, as to take any dishonorable step in order to compass it. He can have patience, and brook disappointments; and, by *gentle* and *gradual* means and progress, is more likely to succeed in the end, than others are, by violence and impetuosity. In his highest undertakings, he wishes not to have the appearance of a meteor, which fires the atmosphere; or of a comet, which astonishes by its blazing, eccentric course: but rather to resemble those steady luminaries of heaven, which advance in their orbits

with a *silent* and *regular* motion. He approves himself thereby to the virtuous, the wise and discerning ; and, by a *temperate* and *unexceptionable conduct*, escapes those *dangers* which persons of an opposite description are perpetually ready to incur.

“That candor which is a Christian virtue, consists not in fairness of speech, but in [honesty] and fairness of heart. It may want the blandishment of external courtesy, but supplies its place with humane and generous liberality of sentiment. Its manners are unaffected, and its professions cordial. Exempt on the one hand, from the dark jealousy of a suspicious mind ; it is no less removed on the other from that easy credulity which is imposed on by every specious pretence. The man of charity and candor makes allowance for the mixture of evil with good, which is to be found in *every* human character. He expects *none* to be faultless ; and he is unwilling to believe that there is any without some commendable quality. In the midst of many defects, he can discover a virtue. Under the influence of personal resentment, he can be just to the merit of an enemy. He never lends an open ear to those defamatory reports and dark suggestions, which, among the tribes of the censorious, circulate with so much rapidity, and meet with such ready acceptance. He is not *hasty* to judge, and he requires *full evidence* before he will condemn. As long as an action can be ascribed to *different* motives, he holds it as *no* mark of sagacity to impute it to the *worst*. When there is just ground for doubt, he keeps his judgment undecided ; and, during the period of suspense, leans to the most charitable construction which an action can bear. When he must condemn, he condemns with *regret* ; and without those aggravations which the severity of others adds to the crime. He listens calmly to the apology of the offender, and readily admits every extenuating circumstance which equity can suggest. How much soever he may blame the principles of any sect or party, he never confounds, under one general censure, all who belong to that party or sect. He charges them not with such consequences of their tenets, as they refuse and disavow. From *one* wrong

opinion, he does not infer the subversion of *all* sound principles; nor, from one bad action, conclude that all regard to conscience is overthrown. When he 'beholds the mote in his brother's eye,' he remembers 'the beam in his own.' He *commiserates* human frailty, and judges of others, according to the principles by which he would think it reasonable that they should judge of him. In a word, he views men and actions in the clear sunshine of charity and good nature, and not in that dark and sullen shade which *jealousy* and *party spirit* throw over *all* characters.

"From general good-will, it extends its influence *particularly* to those with whom we stand in the nearest connection, and who are directly within the sphere of our good offices. Towards our enemies it inspires *forgiveness and humility*. It breathes universal candor and liberality of sentiment. It forms gentleness of temper, and dictates affability of manners. It prompts corresponding sympathies with them who rejoice, and those who weep. It teaches us to despise and slight no man. It is *the comforter* of the afflicted, the *protector* of the oppressed, the *reconciler* of differences, the *intercessor* for offenders. It is faithfulness in the friend, *equity* and *patience* in the judge, moderation in the sovereign, and loyalty in the subject." And as this is true as it respects civil society, it is equally true in religious, that it leads to the *subordination* of individuals to the respective bodies of which they are members, of inferior bodies to superior, and to the subjection of all, both individuals and bodies, to the will and government of the Head of the Church.

"Religion and government are the two great foundations of order and comfort among mankind, and wisdom is no less necessary in religious and moral, than in civil conduct. Unless there be a proper degree of light in the understanding, it will *not* be enough that there are good dispositions in the heart. Without regular guidance [and restraint] they will often err from the right scope. This is too much verified by that propensity to run into *extremes*, which so often appears in the behaviour of men. How many have originally set out with good principles and intentions, who, through *want of*



*discretion* in the application of their principles, have in the end injured themselves, and brought discredit on religion! There is a certain temperate mean, in the observance of which piety and virtue consist. On each side there lies a *dangerous extreme*. Bewildering paths open, by deviating into which, men are apt to forfeit all the praise of their good intentions, and to finish with reproach, what they have begun with honor.

“It is of the utmost importance to guard against extremes of *every kind* in religion. We must beware, lest, by seeking to avoid one rock, we split not upon another. It has long been the subject of remark, that superstition and enthusiasm are two capital sources of delusion; superstition, on the one hand, attaching men with *immoderate zeal* to the external part of religion; and enthusiasm, on the other, directing the *whole* attention to internal emotions, and mystical communications with the spiritual world; while neither the one nor the other, has paid sufficient regard to the great moral duties of the Christian life.

“From this disposition, or liability to run into extremes, often arises *rashness* of judgment, than which nothing can be more contrary both to equity and sound reason. As from one good action it were credulity, not charity, to conclude a person free from all vice; so, from one which is censurable, it is perfectly unjust to infer, that the author of it is without conscience, and without merit. Did we know all the circumstances, it might appear in an excusable light; nay, perhaps, under a commendable form. The motives of the actor may have been entirely different from those which we ascribe to him; and, where we suppose him impelled by bad design, he may have been prompted by conscience and *mistaken* principle. Admitting the action to have been in every view criminal, he may have been hurried into it through *inadvertency* and surprise. He may have sincerely repented; and the virtuous principle may have now regained its full vigor;” so that it becomes us to be moderate and charitable in judging of the motives by which *others* are actuated.

By the example, precepts, and Spirit of our holy Redeemer, we are taught to love, forgive, and pray for our enemies, not

only for the security of our own peace, but as a means of winning them unto Him, who, while we were yet sinners, and offenders against Him, died for us, "*the just for the unjust.*" Let us remember, for our instruction, his forbearance, long-suffering, and tender mercy towards those who *were* the enemies of his outward appearance, works, and teachings; how that He even reproved his servant for attempting, by violence, to vindicate his cause, and bade him suffer, rather than punish the enemies of himself and his disciples.

If He could meekly, and without resistance or retaliation, bear the reproaches and denial of his enemies, are we justified in lifting up the sword against them? Have we not read, and has it not been told us, that we should love our enemies, bless them that curse us, and pray for those that revile and persecute us, not seeking to avenge ourselves by returning evil for evil, but contrariwise blessing, whereunto we are called? Every departure from the rule and commandments of our holy Redeemer, will be visited with a just retribution; for, as we mete unto others, so *will* it be measured to us again, and with what judgment we judge we *shall* be judged, not only as individuals, but as a people, or party in Society.

Therefore, how doth it behoove us to keep near to the Captain of our salvation, who putteth forth, and goeth before his true and faithful servants, making a way for them where there seems to be no way; opening the hearts of the people to receive their labors of love, for his and their sake, in which there is no compulsion, violence, or force, but their dependence is upon the convincing, and *gentle*, and *persuasive* power of the Gospel, to overcome the enemy of souls in the hearts of the people; and what cannot be effected by this, they refrain from undertaking, knowing the power of Truth to be sufficient for the accomplishment of its own purposes, and hoping to triumph in this alone, which shall ever have the victory.

May the time past suffice for us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles by a departure from the law, order, and government of Truth, to the begetting of strifes, contentions, and divisions, by which our high and holy profession has been

reproached. But, notwithstanding our many departures, both upon the right hand and upon the left, the great Head of the Church has been merciful to our unrighteousness, in that we are not yet a forsaken people.

And if we would only forget the things that are behind, and seek to reach and press forward to those that are before, He would yet manifest his glory and power amongst us, as in days that are past, when we were so signally blest with judges and counsellors, who were made quick of understanding in his fear, judging not by the sight of the eye, or the hearing of the ear, but by the witness for God in their own souls, which testifieth against all harshness and cruelty of conduct, all error in practice or doctrine, all exercise of lordship and strife after dominion and revenge, all impatience under trial and suffering, all discords and divisions, and, finally, against every disposition and proceeding, which is opposed to the increase and spread of the Gospel of love, life, and salvation, for it is His will that this should prevail, and extend from the rivers to the very ends of the earth.

“Can wars, and jars, and fierce contention,  
Swollen hatred, and consuming envy, spring  
From piety?—No, ’tis opinion  
That makes the riven heaven with trumpets ring,  
And thundering engine murderous balls outsling,  
And send men’s groaning spirits to lower shade  
Of deep distress. This, the wide world doth bring  
To *devastation*, makes man to fade;  
Such direful things doth false religion persuade.

“But true religion, sprung from God above,  
Is like her fountain—full of charity;  
Embracing all things with a tender love,  
Full of *good-will* and *meek expectancy*;  
Full of *true justice* and sure verity,  
In heart and voice: free, large, even infinite;  
Not wedged in strait particularity,  
But grasping all in her vast active might—  
Bright lamp of God, that men would joy in thy pure light.”

“The man of peace is *mild* in his demeanor, and inoffensive in his discourse, and appears to despise no man. He is *not*

fond of contradicting and opposing, and is always *averse* to censure and to blame. He never erects himself into the character of a dictator in Society, and never officiously seeks to intermeddle in the affairs of others, nor to pry into their secrets; and avoids every occasion of disturbing the good-will which men appear to bear to one another. He has a disposition *averse* to giving offence, and is desirous of cultivating harmony and an amicable intercourse in Society. His manners are yielding and condescending, and he has an unwillingness to contend with others about trifles, and, in contests that are unavoidable, exercises a *proper moderation* of spirit.

“Such a temper is the first principle of self-enjoyment, and is the basis of all order and happiness among mankind. Opposite to the man of this disposition, stands the character of a man of an *unpeaceable* and *quarrelsome* spirit; who, himself easily provoked by every trifle, is continually offending and provoking others by the *harshness* of his behavior. He is *loud* in his censures, *positive* in his opinions, and *impatient* of all contradiction. He is ‘a busy-body in *other men’s* matters;’ *descants* on their characters, inquires into their conduct, and, on the authority of his own suspicions, assigns what motive he pleases to their actions. Into the *violence of party spirit* he *never fails to enter deeply*; and confidently ascribes the worst principles to all who differ from him in opinion. Such persons are the pests of Society, and the troublers of all good order in human life.

“The positive and contentious, the rude and quarrelsome, are the bane of Society. They seem destined to blast the small share of comfort which has been allotted here to man. But they cannot disturb the peace of others more than they break their own. The hurricane first rages in their own bosom, before it is let forth upon the world. In the tempest which they raise, they are always tossed; and frequently it is their lot to perish.

“A peaceable temper must be supported by a *candid* one, or a disposition to view the conduct of others with *fairness* and *impartiality*. This stands opposed to a jealous and suspicious temper, which ascribes *every* action to the *worst*

motive, and throws a *black* shade over *every* character. As we would be happy in ourselves, or in our connections with others, we must guard against this *malignant spirit*, and study that charity which ‘thinketh no evil;’ that temper which, without degenerating into credulity, will dispose us to be *just*; and which can allow us to observe an error *without* imputing it as a crime. Thus shall we be kept free from that continued irritation which imaginary injuries raise in a suspicious breast, and enabled to walk among men as our brethren, and not our enemies.

“The way to any good degree of perfection in the Divine life lies through *great mortification* and *self-denial*. Some think it enough to get doctrines into the *head*, but, until the *heart* is in some measure purified by the faith which works by love, *nothing is rightly done*. And in order to this, the children of Anak, those corrupt passions and inclinations that war against the soul, must be driven out, the *perverseness of the will broken*, the understanding simplified, the pride of our hearts plucked up by the roots, and all the chords that bind us to the world, and the things of it, loosened; our idols must be cast out, and every offensive thing removed that separates between God and us; for the pure in heart, and they only, shall see God.

• “The Gospel of Christ is a dispensation of *peace*, graciously calculated to reconcile us both to God and one another; but how it has failed, in general, of these blessed effects, through the prevailing power of corruption and sin, let the annals of Church history testify. The animosities that prevail among the several divided parties of Christians in the world, are indubitable proof that the spirit of persecution neither slumbereth nor sleepeth; nor can we hesitate to pronounce that they have war in their hearts, whilst they sharpen their tongues like a serpent, and shoot out their arrows, even *bitter words*. If we fix our attention on the wrangling disputes of the learned, and the bigoted zeal of the ignorant, we shall be tempted to say, the whole is a Babel of contention.

“The falling of the Church into a variety of opinions [respecting the outward discipline and government of it] is

impossible to be prevented, by lawful courses ; therefore, this is a thing not to be condemned in itself, for under diversity of judgments, God may be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth, as in the primitive time by the Jewish and Gentile Christians ; which variety offends not God, so that obedience to magistrates be firmly retained, and a zeal for holiness, *more than for opinions*, and those healing principles of charity be kept alive, which cherish mutual forbearance and love to each other, under our different apprehensions.

“ Order is well consistent with diversity, though not with confusion ; nay, diversity, in proper disposition and arrangement, is, in frequent instances, the very beauty of order ; and such diversity is visible in all God’s works. If men therefore differ, let it be according to their order, and to the will of God, and then all is well ; the want of unity in their form will be no hindrance to their unity of spirit in the bond of peace, and their differences will become only as the different notes in the psaltery, whose variety harmonizes in one melodious sound.

“ The enemies of religion have ever exulted at beholding animosities and divisions in the Church, which have furnished them with arguments in favor of infidelity. They have looked upon the professors of religion as laboring more to support the credit of *a party*, than the interests of true piety. There is a species of malignant enthusiasm, which is common, and consists in a *blind intemperate zeal* for something called religion, under the bitter fury of *party* rage, directed by the untutored passions of the natural man, and standing in all the depravity of corrupt nature, and it is by the exercise of this that the Truth is often brought under reproach.

“ If some notions about doctrines enter into this kind of zeal, as charity is wanting, they only serve to inflame it the more, whilst they go about to sanctify their wrath with the pretence of contending earnestly for the faith. The mad knight-errantry of the Crusades was strongly tinged with this spirit of enthusiasm, and likewise wars in every age have been entered into for the propagation of religion ; and such

madness unto the death has been fancied martyrdom. As this kind of wild-fire zeal greatly inflames the passions, the Devil finds an *easy* access through it to the heart, where he reigns with uncontrolled dominion, and is properly and truly abomination sitting in the holy place, even that place which should be a temple consecrated to God, and the peaceful habitation of the Spirit of Love.

“And this is deservedly called a *malignant enthusiasm*, from the effects it produces, such as variance, wrath, strife, wars, and persecutions on account of religion, men acting the part of savages, one by another, at the instigation of the Devil, and calling it the doing God service. All such professors, however much they may boast the antiquity of their Church, the excellency of their constitution and discipline, or the orthodoxy of their creed, do, notwithstanding, fall greatly short of the religion of good heathens, and we scruple not to pronounce that Plato and Plotinus had a better faith and practice. Mere human virtues, founded on natural benevolence, are preferable to a persecuting, and therefore false Christianity.

“An acquaintance with Church history will show that the same spirit of wrath and bitterness which, in the form of Popery, burnt the Protestants, soon after crept into a better form, and hunted down the Puritans; and when the Presbytery got into the chair of authority, the same evil spirit, dressed in a new cloak of reformation, forged the fetters of a new uniformity, and laid the axe to the root of Episcopacy. Independency promised better things, and pleaded loudly and strongly for liberty of conscience, and universal toleration; and yet, when Independents, driven from the rigors of church government out of Old England, got footing and power in New England, they forgot their sufferings and their principles, and there persecuted the Quakers; but these last, though we have seen them with government in their hands, were never known to persecute or molest any for conscience sake. To the honor of that people this is spoken.”

I would that this might as truly be said of Friends, as it respects their conduct one towards another, as it can proba-

bly be respecting their treatment of other religious denominations ; for it would appear that, at the present time, our greatest enemies were those of our own household by profession, with whom the spirit of malignity is covered by a good profession, under which they pass for the friends of Truth. But—

“ There is an eye that marks the ways of men,  
 With strict *impartial* analyzing ken ;  
 Our motley creeds, our crude opinions lie  
 All, all unveiled to that Omniscient eye.  
 He sees the *softest shades* by error thrown,  
 Marks where His truth is left to shine *alone*,  
 Decides with most exact *unserring* skill,  
 Wherein we differ from his word and will :  
 No specious names nor reasoning, to his view,  
 The false can varnish, or deform the true ;  
 Nor vain excuses e'er avail to plead,  
 The *right of theory for the wrong of deed*.  
 Before that unembarrassed *just* survey  
 What heaps of refuse must be swept away !  
 How must its search from every creed remove  
 All, all but the golden grains of *truth and love* !  
 Yet with compassion for our feeble powers,  
 For oh, His thoughts and ways are not as ours.  
 There is a day in flaming terrors bright,  
 When truth and error shall be brought to light ;  
 Who then shall arise amid the shining throng,  
 To *boast* that *he* was right and *others* wrong.  
 When each rejoicing saint shall veil his face,  
 And none may triumph but in glorious grace ;  
 No meaner praise shall heavenly tongues employ,  
 Yet they shall reap the more abundant joy,  
 Who sought His truth, with *simple, humble* aim  
 To do His will, and magnify His name.”

Have we not, as a people, been covering ourselves with a spirit which is not of Him whom we profess to follow and serve ? and have we not found the garment insufficient to conceal our nakedness from the omniscient eye of our impartial Judge and King, who is no respecter of persons, but as he knows the secrets of all hearts, so he rewardeth us according to the purity thereof, without regard to profession, name, or station ? And what doth he require of thee, O man, but



*to deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with him?* And how can we discharge these incumbent duties, while our eye is turned outward to the teachings and leadings of men, who, with a *selfish* and *partial* end in view, are seeking to attain this, under the profession of a love and regard for the Truth; whereby God is robbed of his honor, and the Church of her crown?

Ah, have we not been following that spirit which "is like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt," forgetting that in quietness and confidence is our strength? Have we not been looking to our own works for the security of our peace, rather than by standing still, to behold the salvation of the Lord; thereby despising the blood of the covenant, and esteeming it an unholy thing? Let us look at these things that we may see, before it is too late, where we are being led by the spirit of darkness, who hath transformed himself into an angel of light, to the deceiving, if it were possible, the very elect; for what will it avail us, in the great day of final account, to have made a good profession among men, and to have observed the strictest rules of morality, and to have held sound literal views, if we have not exemplified, in our lives and conversation, the doctrine of our holy Redeemer, "without me ye can do nothing," thereby ascribing unto Him the honor and praise of all the good works wrought *in* and *through* us, and making self of no reputation, according to his example and teachings.

It is doubtless because of our departures from the faith which is in Christ, depending too much upon what has been done *for us without us*, or relying too much upon what has been or may be done *by us*, and not sufficiently upon the *inward workings of the Spirit* of Grace, that the line of confusion has been stretched over us; and that we might be brought more fully to see and acknowledge our own insufficiency to perform any good and acceptable work. Then, as the pride and haughtiness of man is laid low, He will doubtless exalt us to the stations designed for us in his body, the Church, so that there shall be "judges as at the first, and counsellors as in the beginning," who shall faithfully follow

the teachings and leadings of the Holy Spirit, according to our profession. "When Ephraim spake trembling he exalted himself in Israel, but when he offended in Baal he died." And may we be admonished thereby, ascribing unto our Father in heaven the kingdom, the will, and the power, and acknowledging that unto Him belongeth all honor and praise, but unto us blushing and confusion of face.

Notwithstanding all that has happened amongst us, it is hard to discover any *good* ground for leaving any of the various co-ordinate bodies in Society, but it rather seemeth meet for faithful members to stand their ground, relying upon the mighty power of Truth to sustain them, as it most assuredly would, were they engaged to cast their burden upon the Lord, trusting in Him as their buckler and shield, their helper and their deliverer. If the body of Society is corrupt or degenerating, it has so much more need of the help of the faithful, to restore or preserve it, and it is difficult to perceive how any rightly concerned Friend could consent to leave the particular body of which he may be, or may have been a member, for it is evident that nothing will be gained either to himself or those with whom he has been in outward communion or association; but on the contrary, much will be lost by both, in every sense; for weakness is the almost inevitable result of divisions, as we have abundantly witnessed.

Let us, then, strive to come and keep together, whatever our trials and sufferings may be, for the great Head of the Church will assuredly reward us for the patient endurance of them; casting our burden upon Him, trusting in his almighty power to sustain and bring us through to the promised enjoyment of unity and peace in Him. "What God hath brought and joined together, let not man put asunder." And I confidently believe that the gathering of this people, out from the churches and nations of the earth, was the work of the Lord, that he might make of us a united and peculiar people, who should bear testimony to the spirituality and power of the Gospel, which is able to save all that be-

lieve therein, from their sins, but—mark the difference—not in them.

Our profession is not only high and holy, but a very responsible one, and every departure from consistency therewith is observed by the great Head of the Church, and though he has been, and continues to be very merciful to our unrighteousness, yet his Spirit will not always strive with man. But if, as poor prodigals, who have spent our substance in *riotous* living, we are engaged to return unto him, with the acknowledgment that we are no longer worthy to be called his sons, and the desire that he would make us as hired servants, he will not fail to meet, embrace, and bless us; bestowing again upon us the good things of his kingdom, comparable to the fatted calf, prepared for a feast of rejoicing; for there is more joy in heaven over *one* sinner that repenteth, than over the ninety and nine just men that need no repentance.

How much better and more hopeful, therefore, is the case of the humble penitent sinner, than that of the proud justifier of himself, as has been aptly illustrated in the case of the poor publican and the self-righteous Pharisee, for, while the former dare not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, Lord be merciful to me a sinner, he went down to his house, justified rather than the other, who presumed to thank God that he was not as other men, professing to be nearly if not quite faultless. And it has appeared to me that if we were individually disposed and engaged to have a willingness wrought in us, to be stripped of the filthy rags of our own righteousness, that we might be clothed with the pure and seamless garment of the righteousness and love of God, in which there is neither rent nor division, that we would again witness the arisings of Divine life amongst us, to as eminent a degree as ever before; and experience our "peace to flow as a river, and our righteousness as the waves of the sea;" then would there be raised up, qualified, and sent amongst us a band of Gospel messengers, who should proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the unsearchable riches of Christ, whom they would preach as a crucified Saviour, a

measure of whose sufferings is left to be filled up by us, as members of his body.

And as it should become our engagement to suffer patiently and faithfully with Him for the body's sake, there would be no flying as upon horses or in chariots, but we should be made willing to stand our ground in the day of battle, humbly relying upon the Almighty Arm of Power to save and deliver; for we are assured this is not shortened, that it cannot save, nor is his ear grown heavy that it cannot hear; but, for the crying of the *poor*, and the sighing of the *needy*, He *will* arise with healing in his wings. He will bind up the wounds of his afflicted children, as they continue faithful in the hour of trial and extremity; and will not suffer them to be overcome; but with every temptation will make a way of escape, as they are engaged to call upon and cleave unto Him.

Therefore, let us lay aside all that is standing opposed to our unity with Him, and one with another in Him, that we may become a Holy Church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, a building compacted and cemented together by the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, whom he hath given a sacrifice for us all, that we might be made living stones in his spiritual house, of which Christ is the chief of the corner, the rock of ages, the foundation upon which the true and living Church is built, which is made up of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

As one branch of this living Church, let us endeavor to cease our contention, one with another, for the name we bear, lest we continue to be divided and subdivided, until we shall become the by-word and reproach of all nations, and of all people who profess the Christian name, and be the means of driving more away from the Truth, through our unfaithfulness, than have ever been gathered into it, through our instrumentality. Let us seek to disappoint those of our enemies who are looking for the occasion of exultation in our division into fragments, as an evidence of the insufficiency of the principles professed by us, to hold us together; and, in order to this, we must be brought to the acknowledgment that "the perfection of the religion which bringeth

salvation, consisteth not in *notion* or speculation, but in Spirit and in Truth; not in form, but in power; not in opinion, called orthodoxy, or in bodily exercise, but in *experience and change of nature*; and that no creeds, nor systems of [religion], no particular schemes or modes of worship, have any other excellency in them for us, than as they are the proper means to produce or cherish *the life of God in the soul of man.*"

"The fervent zeal and diligence of Christ and his ministers in preaching the Gospel is accounted madness and phrenzy by a blind world; but they may say with the Apostle, if *we are beside ourselves, it is unto God and for your sakes.* The workings of grace are sometimes so far above reason that they *seem* to be without reason. That the doctrine of regeneration, or a new *spiritual* birth of a divine nature, together with other matters of inward religion, as well as they that preach them, have of late years fallen under the disgrace and reproach of enthusiasm with many, will not be denied. But this charge is nothing new, or contrary to what might be expected. Wicked and carnal men represent the holy servants of God as a sort of mad-men. There are several acts of holiness which the profane world esteems as madness, such as eminent self-denial, great seriousness in religion, fervent zeal and holy singularity, constant and faithful devotion, *patience and meekness under sufferings and reproaches.* All these acts of holiness represent the saints as mad-men to a carnal man.

"But let not the genuine, plain, and simple Christian, who is happy and blessed in the simplicity of Gospel faith, take offence at the mystery of grace; for it is God's goodness to the distressed state of the Church departed from the life and power of Gospel faith, and groaning under the slavery, darkness, and perplexity of *bewildered reason and opinions.* Neither let the orthodox who sticks close to the phrases and sentiments of antiquity, reject this mystery, but rather thankfully receive it as being the very thing which the distressed and divided state of the Church now so greatly needs, and much more than before it was fallen from its first simplicity of faith; for while *faith* and *life* defended the mysteries, the

pillars and ground of it were not wanting. But when orthodoxy gave itself up to reason, to which it resorted for support and argument, from the letter of Scripture, without a knowledge of the *first ground* of doctrines, then it was only defended, as it is now defended in every sect and division of the Christian world where this prevails."

And the ground of the true knowledge of Christian doctrine is, in *doing the will* of our heavenly Father, for we are told in the Scriptures of Truth that they that do this, shall know of the doctrine; from which we may infer that it is withholden from the unfaithful, who are living and walking in the light of human reason, and according to their own natural inclinations. And "an error, which people of good dispositions, under strong religious influences, are subject to, is that of confounding the motions of God's Holy Spirit with those of their own natural wills and propensities. In our fallen or natural state, the faculties of our minds are so much disordered, through the darkness and deceivableness which sin hath occasioned, that great care and caution should be used, lest we suffer the workings of our corrupt nature to impose upon, or mislead us, or give access through them to the spirit of error and delusion, to deceive us into a *false zeal*."

"And in order to this it will be necessary to live in a daily mortification of our sensual appetites and passions, which have a very powerful influence over our minds; not to indulge any fond desire after visions and voices, but to cherish an *humble* frame of mind, that no inflations of *spiritual pride* may dispose us to believe a lie; and to be much [yea, continually] *in prayer* to God to deliver us from the temptations and delusions of Satan, and all deceits of our own treacherous hearts, so apt to betray us into the enemy's hands; and that he will give us a *right* judgment in all things, that we may be able to discern betwixt truth and error. Such a discipline will be a means to preserve our minds from the imposture of false pictures and images, and enable us to make a right use of God's dealings with us, both in the dispensations of his providence and his grace."

“Faults in the life breed errors in the brain,  
And these reciprocally those again.”

“It is evident, that nothing less than calling people to the *spirit* and *power* of godliness, can be sufficient to bring about a reformation, both of principles and practice, amongst us; and it would seem that this was never more needed. That the best things, when corrupted, become the worst, is a proverbial truth, and if so, *bad Christians* must be the worst of men. The want of *truth* and *justice* in the words and dealings of Christians, is become our reproach in the mouths of infidels.

“It is from a revival of the Spirit of true Christianity in the hearts of men alone, that we can hope to see peace restored on earth, among the divided churches of Christendom; for while religion resides only in the reasoning part of man, it is tinctured with all the prejudices and passions of his nature, and his reason will be ready to plead for or against the Truth, as interest or education sways the man, it being little better than that hired logic that wrangles at the bar, whether it is exercised in the ministry, or wields the sword of controversy. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, *gentle*, full of mercy, and *without* partiality; for the same good Spirit that enlightens the understanding, cleanses the heart from all bitterness, malice, and hypocrisy; and therefore operates by *pureness*, by *knowledge*, by *love unfeigned*. A *party spirit*, whether it be in religion or politics, proceeds from *littleness of mind*, and *narrowness of heart*, and it puts out both the eye of the judgment and the eye of charity, and so hinders us from seeing the brightest excellency in our neighbor that is not just as high or low as ourselves. But the true Christian knows no such straitness, for his bowels are enlarged towards all that will come within the embrace of his charity, which is as wide as the east is from the west. He cannot *wrangle and hate about differences of opinion*, for he is got above them; his call, his universal call is to love, and he has adopted for his motto that saying of Luther, ‘*In whomsoever I see anything of Christ, him I love.*’ In this man, wheresoever he lives, and by whatsoever

name he is called, the kingdom of Christ is come ; and of such heavenly persons it will consist in that enlarged and glorious state of it, which we are given to look for.

“The end which all parts of the Christian mystery point at, is the advancement and *triumph of the Divine life in the soul*, in the exaltation of which, God is most highly glorified. And may we not confidently look forward to a future happy state of the Church, *when the Spirit and Power of the everlasting Gospel shall prevail in the hearts of men ?* But there is an *outside worship*, void of the spirit of devotion, which availeth not, and there is an *outside knowledge* in religion, without the spirit of wisdom, that profiteth not ; for it is not a literal or historical understanding of the Scriptures that maketh wise unto salvation, but, unless the Spirit give an affecting and edifying interpretation of them, they will be but as a sealed book to us in things pertaining to God. Paul disclaims all human knowledge and self-ability, considered separately from the Divine teachings of the Spirit, as insufficient for the work of the ministry. ‘Our sufficiency,’ says he, ‘is of God, who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, *not of the letter, but of the Spirit.*’

“ Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,  
 Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,  
 I would express him *simple, grave, sincere*,  
 In doctrine *uncorrupt* ; in language *plain*,  
 And *plain* in manner ; *decent, solemn, chaste*,  
 And natural in gesture ; much impressed  
 Himself, as *conscious* of his *awful* charge,  
 And anxious mainly that the *flock* he feeds  
 May *feel* it too ; affectionate in look,  
 And *tender* in address, as well becomes  
 A messenger of grace to guilty man.  
 I venerate the man, whose heart is *warm*,  
 Whose hands are *pure*, whose doctrines and whose life,  
 Coincident, exhibit lucid proof  
 That he is *honest* in the sacred cause.  
 To such I render more than mere respect,  
 Whose actions say, that they respect themselves,  
 And Christ regard, an abler teacher than the schools.  
 He that negotiates between God and man,  
 As God’s ambassador, the grand concerns



Of judgment and mercy, should beware  
 Of lightness in his speech. The preacher, either vain  
 By nature, or by flattery made so, taught  
 To gaze at his own splendor, and to exalt  
 Absurdly, not his office, but himself;  
 Perverting often by the stress of lewd  
 And loose example, whom he should instruct;  
 Exposes, and holds up to broad disgrace,  
 The noblest function, and discredits much  
 The brightest truths that man has ever seen,  
 And brings derision from the scorner's lips;  
 Discrediting alike the sacred office, and the holy cause."

"The primary and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel are, first, our lost and undone condition by nature, which disease finds its remedy in that redemption which is by Jesus Christ. Secondly, the impossibility of being justified before God by any works or deservings of *our own*; but then we are relieved from our impotence and misery by the free offer of that faith and grace, which are sufficient for us. Thirdly, the necessity of a *spiritual birth of a Divine life in our souls*, in order to which there is to be found no help in man; but here the almighty Saviour stands engaged by his sacred promise, that 'to as many as will receive Him, He will give power to become the sons of God.' There is no other ground of despair in these doctrines, than that of being able to become our own saviours, and such kind of despairing must be allowed a necessary step to right believing.

"But alas! our hearts are so straitened, that they cannot receive these doctrines as they ought, and we are so entangled, as to many of us, with such an evil covetousness after the things of this life, *so studious to seek the honor that cometh from men*, more than the honor that cometh of God, that we want boldness to hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *without respect of persons*; for let men be ever so highly titled or characterized, let their pretensions to learning be what they will, and their acquaintance with creeds and professions ever so extensive, yet, so long as they continue *men of this world*, and follow the things of it, so long as their affections are set on things beneath, and their hearts *unsur-*

*rendered to God*, they are no better than dry bones, as to the Divine life, without marrow or moisture; and as they cannot in such a state receive the things of the Spirit of God, not having spiritual senses exercised thereto, so will these things appear foolishness unto them in others, and they will *speake evil of that which they know not*.

“That difference which appears among the fathers of the Church, in their judgment concerning some points of religion, their disputes one against another, and some other particulars in their lives and conduct, if brought to the test of a *severe* examination, may all serve to exemplify the truth of the Apostle’s words, that ‘*every priest taken from among men is compassed about with infirmity*.’ Yet, what shall we say of those who can overlook the eminent gifts and graces of holy men, to pick out the blemishes of human infirmity, in order to discredit their testimony, and all that is holy in their characters. There is not, perhaps, anything more opposed to the Spirit of true Christianity than that closeness and bigotry of spirit, which hinders us from seeing and loving the beauty of holiness in the character of any person, only because he thinks not, or walks not with us, as if the all-bountiful Creator measured out his grace and goodness according to the scanty pattern of the *notional* orthodoxy of men.

“And, therefore, what a little heart must that writer have had, when he went about to depreciate the virtues of an individual, on account of his being of the Romish communion. If his eye had not been blinded by prejudice, he might have seen in him a young man of quality and fortune, renouncing the pomps and vanities of the world, for the love of God; an instance of profound humility in high life, walking in the steps of his blessed Master, and, after his example, going about doing good, both to the bodies and souls of men, and the manifest tokens of a devout heart and heavenly affections, and a most illustrious exemplification of Divine faith, hope, and charity. Of how much more ingenuous, of how catholic a spirit was that honest Quaker, who was so charmed with this pattern of Christian excellence (though, I believe, as much averse to superstition as this author), that he thought

an epitome of such a character an embellishment to his book.\* 'He was,' says he, 'a man of enlightened mind, and of a soul mortified to the world, and quickened to some taste of a supernatural life; let his youth, let his quality, adorned with so much zeal and piety, so much self-denial and constancy, become exemplary to those of worldly quality, who may be the readers of this book.' But what spirit was he tinctured with, and what cause meant he to serve, who took so much pains to disgrace the character of so worthy a man?

"Let it be borne in mind, that they in whom the Spirit of God dwells are but men, and that, therefore, *as they have their treasure in earthen vessels*, their strength will be joined to weakness; for few, very few there are, who have their minds so thoroughly enlightened with wisdom from above, and their hearts so totally purified by faith and humility, as not to have remaining in them *great* mixtures of ignorance and frailty. Hence, arise frequent mistakes in eminent Christians in regard to their spiritual estate; great unevenness and inconstancy. They find in themselves, at times, a very ardent love of God, and the flame of their devotion rises high, and, at other times, these are withdrawn, and they are dejected; hence, the frequent complaints of desertions, darkness, and the hidings of God's face. The like vicissitudes we meet with in David, &c.

"The Christian life is not a state of uninterrupted comfort, as some describe it, herein speaking from their *system*, and not from any *experience* of their own. It is not the way of God's dealings with us, nor is it meet for us, that we should always walk on our high places, and feed on the mountains of exaltation, but descend at times into the valley beneath, for our trial and humiliation. It was here that the Son of God walked when he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood; here it was that he drank of the bitter cup; and here we must follow him through death to life eternal."

And, in the Holy Scriptures, we find a woe pronounced upon those who are at ease in Zion; those who are shunning the suffering and reproach of the Cross, preferring a release

\* Penn's "No Cross, no Crown."

from those trials and baptisms, through which every true Christian must pass, and to avoid the burdens which rest upon faithful members of the Church, to the endurance of them for Christ's and the Church's sake, as well as for that of their own souls. And hence, when the Church is brought under suffering and reproach, these stand ready to desert it, like the timid and unfaithful mariner, who, when his vessel is tossed to and fro by the wind and waves, forsakes his post, leaving his frail bark to the direction of the raging elements, without reference to compass or chart, or resort to helm or anchor, whereby it might be saved from the threatening wreck; and, being unwilling to avail himself of the means provided for the emergency, according to the call of duty as well as interest, the vessel, with all its freight of life and treasure, is abandoned to the contending elements, by whose destroying power it is consigned to ruin.

If it were our individual engagement to wrestle for the blessing of Heaven, that it might rest upon us and others, with no lower end in view, I verily believe, that we should witness the extending of the hand of help and preservation; for He in whom we profess to trust, has never said to wrestling seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain. If we would only consent that the Jonah of self-will, or party spirit, should be cast into the deep, the raging of the mighty sea of contention and strife, upon which we are launched, would be made to cease, and we should be permitted to sail again in quiet waters, wherein there should go no galley with oars, neither should gallant ship be found therein, but patience, humility, and love, would be found where wrangling debate, spiritual pride, envy, jealousy, and hatred, had been before, and instead of discord and divisions, there would be harmony and unity.

It is not only a calamity to us, as individuals, and a religious Society, that we are launched upon the sea of contention and strife, but a reproach to the Truth of our profession, and a hindrance to the cause of universal righteousness, which, in time past, we have been instrumental in advancing and exalting, by the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, which

was so eminently experienced by our worthy forefathers, while they adhered to the doctrines and discipline of the Gospel of Christ. These faithful followers of the Lamb of God were as an ensign to the people round about them, many of whom, seeing their good works, were led to glorify our Father in heaven. Their love one for another became proverbial, and by their honest, upright, and self-denying lives, they were regarded as examples of holiness and virtue.

But as the Society advanced in years and increased in numbers, wealth, and popularity, it began to wane, until there would now seem to be a general lapse from primitive faith and purity. The flattery, caresses, and enticements of the world, have proved too much for us, and so we have been led to adopt its manners, maxims, and customs, until, in many places, the line of demarcation between us and the turners aside to vanity, is nearly obliterated. The hedge which the great Head of the Church, in his goodness and mercy to our souls, condescended to set about us, has been broken down, so that the foxes, from little to great, have entered the sacred inclosure and spoiled our vines.

“ O Popular Applause ! what heart of man  
Is proof against thy sweet seducing charms ?  
The wisest and the best feel urgent need  
Of all their caution in thy gentlest gales ;  
But swelled into a gust—who then, alas !  
With all his canvas set, and inexpert,  
And therefore heedless, can withstand thy power ? ”

And what is now to be done ? Will we not seek to build up the wall, each one over against our own houses, that the vineyard may again be restored to fruitfulness ? for “ the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant ; ” and this he hath promised to keep and to water ; and, lest any hurt it, to keep it night and day. His people are in his hands, and as they are engaged to seek and to cleave unto him, he will cause them “ to take root and to blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit. ” And, in the day of desolation he hath promised that he would gather the children of Israel, *one by one*, and that they shall come that were ready to perish.

And cannot many, in this day of sifting and trial, acknowledge that they have been singled out by him, and brought into his favor and service, even through darkness and desolation, wherein there hath appeared nothing but barrenness, nothing but a waste and howling wilderness, where there had been a defenced city? Let us not then be discouraged by our trials, but seek to have them sanctified by the grace of God, which bringeth salvation; and then, I believe, we shall be brought to experience the overruling hand of Providence to have wrought through them a happy deliverance from the enemies of our peace and unity one with another in Christ, our omnipotent and merciful Head. "Before I was afflicted," said the Psalmist of Israel, "I went astray, *but now* have I kept thy word."

If the trials through which we, as individuals and as a religious body, have been, or may yet be brought, are rightly improved, they will, I verily believe, be the means of settling us more firmly upon the right foundation, enabling us to see for ourselves, that the suffering of affliction is a necessary means for the purification of our hearts from the dross of unrighteousness, and from the reprobate silver of self-sufficiency; for when our hearts and conduct become disordered, through the indulgence in wrong practices, or views, nothing short of the purifying power of the furnace of affliction, can ever be able to cleanse and set them right again, nothing short of the exertion of that power by which the worlds were created, and Christ raised from the dead, can raise a soul from the death of sin, unto a life of righteousness, and "turn us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that we may receive remission of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified, by faith in Jesus."

"The battle is the Lord's, and it is his own arm that getteth himself the victory, subduing his and our enemies under his feet; for in this world there are two kingdoms at war, Heaven against Hell, and Christ against Belial, and where these are the powers engaged, *what* is thy utmost strength, O man, but as the shaking of a leaf? Go not up then to the fight, but stand thou still, and see the salvation of God, for

‘in quietness and confidence shall be thy strength.’ In vain we go about to trim and adorn ourselves with our profession, and self-wrought reformatations, as with the true wedding garment, whilst the man of sin is in full possession of the heart; for though these things may be [pleasing] unto men, they cannot commend us unto God; no plant that our heavenly Father hath not planted, can bring forth fruit good and acceptable in his sight. Nothing that is in man, whether it be a *notional* knowledge of our redemption by Christ, or the power to perform works in *our own* strength, can ever enable us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. All the powers of flesh and blood are insufficient for *this* purpose, and if we take never so much pains to adorn the outward man with a civil, or even saint-like behavior, as thinking anything to be conversion but that which is effected by the power of the Holy Ghost, we entirely mistake our case, and will be in danger of rejecting our remedy, for the evils that are in us.”

Therefore as the will, the power, and the glory are all to be ascribed to the great Head of the Church, how unwarrantable and *unjust* is it in us, to be taking unto ourselves the honor or praise of the good works wrought in and through us. “Human respects have always been a great snare, even to persons of good disposition, in the ways both of virtue and godliness, which gave occasion for the caution, ‘that we suffer not the reverence of any man to cause us to fall.’ And how many have fallen from very high estates in gifts and favors, through the want of a regard for this admonition, by suffering their minds to become exalted above measure, from the praise and admiration of men. And this remark will apply in an especial manner to those who have become eminent, as ministers of the Gospel. How frequent and how great has been the fall of these! and in many instances, how fearful has been the effect of this upon those who have regarded them as the oracles of God, and who, coming to rely upon them for divine instruction, more than upon the immediate teachings of the Holy Spirit, have suffered themselves to be led by them into the devious paths of error, both in doctrine and practice.

"Ye [ministers!] while your orbit is your place,  
 Lights of the world, and stars of the human race;  
 But, if eccentric, ye forsake your sphere,  
 Prodigies ominous, viewed with fear;  
 The comet's baneful influence is a dream;  
 Yours, real and pernicious in the extreme.  
 But if the wanderer his mistake discern,  
 Judge his own ways, and sigh for a return,  
 Bewildered once, must he bewail his loss  
 Forever and forever? No—the Cross;  
 There, and there only, is the power to save.  
 There no delusive hope invites despair,  
 No mockery meets us, no deception there.  
 The spells and charms, that blinded us before,  
 All vanish there, and fascinate no more.  
 Ye hearers, spare your idol! think him human still,  
 Charms he may have, but he has frailties too,  
 Dote not too much, nor spoil what ye admire.  
 All truth is from the sempiternal source  
 Of light divine. More favored we drink,  
 When we choose it at the fountain-head."

It is evident, from the rents and divisions which have been occasioned amongst us, by the departures of ministers from the *legitimate* duties of their high calling, and from the faith and patience of the saints, that we as a people are too much bound up in them, even to idolatry. And seeing that this is so, what more can we expect than the mighty shakings that have appeared amongst us, in order that we may cease from man, and trust in God alone, whom, through Christ, we profess as our teacher and leader, our Saviour and King. O, what harm has been wrought amongst us, through the idolizing of the instruments of God, who, upon the discovery of their influence and power over the minds of their worshippers, have become self-sufficient and presuming, turning the grace of God into a means of over-driving or oppressing the flock, over which they have been set as delegated shepherds, or of gaining the admiration and praise of their hearers, to the feeding of their natural appetite for the honor which cometh from men; whereby, "becoming exalted in their imaginations, their



foolish hearts have become darkened," the heavenly anointing being withheld from them.

How traceable, therefore, is the occasion of our present sorrowful condition (in great measure at least) to our unfaithfulness, respecting instrumental ministry, both on the part of ministers and hearers; the one suffering themselves to become exalted through the undue reverence of men for the gifts and station, and the other allowing themselves to be taken in the snare of idolatry, to the blinding of their eyes to the fallibility of the creature; so that all the parties or factions into which the Church has ever been divided, have been headed and led by headstrong and self-sufficient ministers, having some favorite point to carry. And it seems now to be time that we had learned obedience by what we have suffered, lest through the continuance of the evils, by which the Truth has been reproached, we become a forsaken people, and the despised and despisers of God, and one of another; for the sowing of discord among brethren, *is* among the seven things which the Lord *doth* hate, and *will* judge.

How has the prevalence of a party spirit closed up the way for the free circulation of the spirit of Gospel love in our hearts, and against the labors of faithful Gospel ministers, to the increase of their bonds? But the time is approaching, I humbly trust, when these shall be loosed, and they shall be set free to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ, for I believe that the plagues, which have come upon us, have had a softening and an awakening effect, bringing us nearer together, in mutual sympathy, and to the acknowledgment that "One is our Master, even Christ, and all we are brethren." Many have been brought to a state of *trembling*, because of the hardness of their hearts, and to seek by prayer and supplication their deliverance from the bondage of corruption, in which they have been held by the enemy of the peace of Jerusalem, and of the enlargement of her borders; and, as these continue faithful in their exercises before the Lord, they will experience the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host; for the horse and his rider shall be thrown into the depths of the sea, while these devout and humble souls shall

be enabled to sing the song of Moses, upon the banks of deliverance, saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are all thy ways, thou King of saints."

It is not by the high and hasty strivings of the creature, in his own strength, that he is enabled to rise superior to his soul's enemies; but the lowly and despised Seed of the woman is alone able to bruise the serpent's head; and as this is allowed to rule and to reign, it will work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, than any worldly possession, attainment, or enjoyment, can ever be able to afford; and will more than compensate for these light afflictions, which we are called to endure but for a moment. As it is written, "The servant of the Lord shall not strive, and he that believeth, maketh not haste;" for their trust is in the Lord, that he will work in them and for them, as they patiently wait for his appearing. It was not with the armor of Saul that David was enabled to overcome the defier of Israel, but with the *simple* sling, and the *smooth* stone taken from the brook; and it will ever be found that it is by a simple and humble reliance upon the grace of God alone, as the means whereby we are to triumph over our enemies, that we shall be led forth unto victory; for "He will not give his glory unto another, nor his praise to graven images," however specious and powerful they may appear in the view of men.

And this grace *hath appeared unto all men*, teaching them what they should do and what they should leave undone, and enabling them to do, or forbear, according to the Divine will; wherefore, we are left without excuse for our wanderings from the path of wisdom and holiness, which leads to peace. Those who are engaged to walk faithfully herein, are preserved from all wrath and bitterness, all envy, malice, and jealousy, all harshness and roughness, all strife, haste, and contention, and all partiality and hypocrisy in their conduct and conversation amongst men, preferring to endure affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season; for they are persuaded that the triumph of the sinner is short, though he may for a time flourish as

the green bay tree; and that the righteous shall be as willows planted beside the rivers of waters, whose leaf shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

And as these are engaged to seek preservation from evil, in their own case, they are also careful to fret not themselves because of evil-doers, nor to be envious of them, seeing that they shall soon be cut off; nor because of those who prosper in their ways, for their concern is, to "trust in the Lord, and do good," relying upon his promise. And if they suffer for well-doing, they take it patiently, *envying not the oppressor, and choosing none of his ways*; for they are persuaded, that He who hath called them into the way of truth and righteousness will continue with, and preserve them, even to the end, according to his promise. Therefore, they seek to cast their burden upon Him, trusting that he will sustain them.

If we, as individuals, and as a people, had been thus preserved, it is very clear that there never would have been a resort to the outrage of truth and feeling, and the violation of Christian discipline, that have been witnessed amongst us, during the progress of the trials and difficulties by which we have been disturbed and divided; there would never have been the appeal to "the body at large" to sustain individuals in the exercise of an unsanctified zeal, in the Spirit of insubordination, nor would ever such an appeal have found favor amongst us; there would never have been the endeavor to avenge individual wrongs, by setting one party in Society against another, and encouraging it in the exercise of censure and defamation, violence, and insubordination, to the disturbance of its peace, from one end of it to the other; and finally, we never should have been so sorely chastened, so grievously confounded and scattered, so sorrowfully, and almost hopelessly divided.

In looking back upon what has passed within our borders, can we not see wherein we have departed from the first principles of our profession—from the *Spirit* of the Gospel, which breathes "peace on earth and good-will to men,"—while contending for the *letter*? Nothing can be plainer; and nothing is more evident, than that there must be a return to

these, before the blessing of peace can rest upon us; trusting in the power of the Gospel to overcome and *reclaim* its enemies, for nothing short of this can ever be able to gather souls unto Christ, whereby they are saved with an everlasting salvation.

Have we not seen enough to convince us of the foolishness and impotency of the wisdom, policy, and strength of man in the great work of Christian redemption, to induce us to lay down the sword of contention and strife; and that "he that taketh the sword, shall perish with the sword?" Have we not seen, with indubitable clearness, that the great Captain of our salvation hath not led us in the way in which we have gone, and that He hath judged us as we have judged others, giving us a full measure of what we have meted to them? And will we not now fear and tremble before Him, who judgeth in all the earth, lest He reward us according to our departures from Him, by withdrawing his holy presence and favor from us?

O, let us return to Him whom we have offended, and, in our approaches to his heavenly throne, seek to embrace all for whom Christ died, without respect of persons or parties; for we may remember that the captivity of Job was turned when he prayed for his friends, whom, before, he had esteemed as enemies; and our call is to universal righteousness, and in vain shall we seek to be justified by *our own*, which leads to the rejection of all those who do not come up to our own standard. "The Lord our righteousness" is our only safe acknowledgment and trust, and without this all our profession is but an empty show; for "no man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," which is in us, except we be reprobate.

Then, as we continue faithful in cleaving unto Him, He will cleave unto us, and gather us into the one precious fold of unity and love, where the voice of contention and strife shall not be heard, and instead of discord and divisions we shall behold harmony and peace; and the shout of a King shall be heard in our camp, proclaiming salvation by Jesus Christ, and preaching repentance, and the forgiveness of sins, through faith in Him.

"Then will praise be heard instead of reasoning pride,  
 And *captious cavil and complaint* subside ;  
 We shall give to religion her unbridled scope,  
 Nor judge by stature a believer's hope ;  
 Pride will fall unpitied, never more to rise,  
*Humility* be crowned, and *faith* receive the prize."

"We have," says a pious author, "had much disputing of late about justification, whilst some have taken the side of *faith*, and others that of *works*, thus dividing those things which God hath closely joined together in the Christian life, and therefore no man should put them asunder. If nothing more was meant by faith than a mere historical belief, rising no higher than [outward] or moral evidence can force it, and sinking again under the objections of every subtle disputant; if this be all that is meant by Gospel faith, it would, indeed, be matter of wonder if such faith could justify. If this were a saving faith, I should think the very devils capable of salvation. But surely this is not the faith of which Paul speaks so many wonderful things ; by which the saints of old *subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained the promises, stopped the mouths of lions*, and did so many other marvellous works. It cannot be said that such is the faith defined by the same Apostle, to be *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*. The faith, then, that we contend for, as truly Christian and justifying, does not arise from historical evidence merely ; much less does it consist in forced speculations, or the uncertain conclusions of human reason, but is of higher origin, even *the gift of God*, a seed of the Divine life in the soul, growing up in a gradual approach toward perfection, and bringing forth *the fruits of the Spirit ; a faith working by love*, producing obedience to all God's commands, and abounding in good works, according to the measure of the abilities which God hath given us ; it is *a power from on high*, at once enlightening and converting the soul ; it is that victory whereby we overcome the world ; and to sum up all, it is hereby that Christ becomes Immanuel, or God with us, and is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

“Christianity thus considered as a *spiritual* religion, and thus highly perfective of the soul, comes represented in all the beauty of holiness, and worthy of the Son of God for its Author. But how different a picture of it has been drawn by several of the contending parties of professing Christians, and how unlike the Divine Original! How has zeal for [sentiments and forms] or zeal against them, usurped the place of substantial piety! What strife about matters of opinion (and sometimes the greatest animosities where the least difference), instead of *that wisdom* which is from above, and *is first pure, then peaceable*; and instead of brotherly kindness and charity, what violence and cruelty on account of religion have disfigured the face of Christendom, as if the wrath of man were the only effectual way to work the righteousness of God! How has the religion, which was designed to recover in us the Divine nature and image, been made an occasion and pretence for committing outrages which are a reproach and disgrace to humanity! How have those who have been called by the name of Christ turned the Gospel of peace into a two-edged sword, to *wound and destroy*!

“Are we not all the sons of one Father travelling towards the same country? Why, then, do brethren thus fall out by the way? Men may profess what they please, and boast of their outward churches all they please; but, whilst they want the spirit of true universal love, they want a necessary mark of their being of the holy and true Church of Christ. It was from such a narrowness as this that the woman of Samaria was led to ask of the blessed Jesus, *How is it that thou being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria?* and it is from the same principle, that the same spirit still prevails, and that, under a religion which teaches the most diffusive benevolence and charity, whilst so many who profess it harden their hearts against their brethren as heretics and reprobates, saying, *Here is Christ, or lo! there. Is, then, Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever, either here or there, in that confined sense which these men suppose? Is he limited to any particular human establishment, or shut up within the narrower inclosure of any sect [or party], dividing*

from it? This is not so, and should not so be considered; for his kingdom is of wider extent, even *in the hearts of all Christians*, however outwardly distinguished or dispersed; and where there is true repentance and faith, humility, simplicity, and purity of heart, there is the temple in which He delighteth to dwell: this is the true communion of saints; for they are influenced and guided by one and the same Holy Spirit: this is that mystical body of which Christ is the supreme and only Head; and *here only the Father is worshipped in spirit and in truth*.

“But there must be an outward and visible Church, as well as an inward and spiritual one; for, though the King’s daughter is, indeed, all glorious within; glorious in the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and glorious in the charms of unaffected piety and all Christian graces, yet she is also comely and decent in her apparel; her government and discipline, her offices [and performances], have their beauty and fitness, their use and excellency: like the Scripture, they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; and generally *necessary* for the more orderly training and building us up in the Divine life. It is by the assembling of ourselves together for the purpose of Divine, solemn, and social worship, and the teachings of a rightly-qualified outward ministry, that the mind is most generally impressed with saving Truth, the affections raised to heavenly things, and the work of grace begun and carried on in the heart: and, therefore, to argue in such a way as might lessen the expediency or necessity of an outward worship and ministry, would be grossly perverting our Saviour’s words; would be arguing against Scripture, and the constant practice of the Church in all ages; and would tend to exclude the service of those bodies which we are taught to *present as a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service*. But, then, we are to remember, that as the soul is of a more excellent nature [and of so much greater value] than the body, so is the part it bears in the great work of religion; and, therefore, whilst we *hold fast the form*, let

us give *the more earnest heed* that we also *worship the Father in spirit and in truth*.

“Is there not a cause,” says our Christian advocate, “and is this not a time to exhort; to encourage one another like true yoke-fellows, in the good work that is given us to do, when infidels and scoffers appear in open defiance against the Lord and his anointed? Their arguments and objections have been fully answered, and their shafts have proved but as *broken reeds*,” whilst those of the ever-blessed Truth have been as a mighty and invincible power, ‘to the pulling down of the strong-holds of sin and Satan, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.’

“True religion hath its adversaries of every denomination, as the openly vicious and profane, and its false friends—no less dangerous enemies—the self-righteous moralist, and the decent external professor who sleeps so securely upon the soft pillows of his forms [and opinions]. But there *are* weapons of a *divine* temper, taken from the armory of God, wherewith to engage against all that oppose the Truth, or hold the same in unrighteousness,” even the pure, gentle, and peaceable wisdom, which cometh down from God out of heaven, and is able to *put to silence the ignorance of foolish men*, who hope to prevail by their own; and this is not only opposed to the unrighteousness, but to the self-righteousness of men; “that abominable idol of pride, before which so many fall down and worship; that filthy cover of polluted rags, that hinders sinners from seeing the corruption of their nature, and the rottenness of their hearts.”

“And can it be doubted whether the *utmost* stretch of zeal and diligence for the glory of God, and the good of souls be at this day necessary, when there is such a visible decay of *true piety*, such a general falling off from the *life and spirit* of Christianity; when there is [in many places] so *little* of the form, and *much less* of the power of godliness to be discerned, and when corruption, self-seeking, and a most idolatrous love



of the things of this world, have so deeply infected all orders and degrees of men amongst us?

“If we take our measures of religion from the Gospel of Christ, or the primitive ages of the Church, how lamentable will appear the degeneracy of these times! To a people decking and contenting themselves with the outward forms of a pharisaical religion, we must preach the necessity of being *born again*, of being created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, and of that *inward* righteousness and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. And, as to the difficulties and discouragements that may present themselves to us in the discharge of this duty, let us remember from whence help and strength cometh, to enable us to overcome them, and seek to put our trust in the invisible and invincible arm of power which has enabled so many who have gone before us, to triumph over all the powers of death and darkness; and who, through the victory which is of faith in Christ, our crucified and risen Lord, have been enabled to stand as testimony and standard-bearers, adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour, by a *holy and temperate zeal*, by *pureness*, by *knowledge*, and by *love unfeigned*, to the subduing of the power of enmity against Him and his children, through the Spirit of Christ which was *in* them, and which wrought *through* them such a mighty reformation in the Church and in the world, turning men from the power of Satan unto God.

“The Lord, who never left himself without witnesses, even in the times of the greatest degeneracy, and who raised up prophets of old to recover the apostate Jews from their defections to idolatry, has in all ages of the Church called forth holy men, animated with a pure and fervent zeal for his glory, and the good of souls, to bear public testimony to the Truth, and to rescue religion from ignorance, error, and corruption. Accordingly we read of many in times past, either boldly protesting against such innovations in doctrine as had endangered the foundations of religion, or built thereon nothing better than a rotten superstructure of wood, hay, stubble; or else leading the benighted Christians from the darkness

and formality of an *outside worship* to repentance from dead works, to a living faith, and to righteousness and Truth in *the inward parts*: nor ought we to think so uncharitably of those who were out of the reach of their instructions and examples, as therefore to conclude that among them were wanting many holy souls, who, though in much weakness and superstition, yet in simplicity and true devotion, found their way to God, and were accepted of Him."

To those whose eye is kept single to the pointings and promotion of the ever blessed Truth, without respect of persons or parties in the Church, "it is comfort and encouragement enough, that Truth is on our side, and that the gates of hell shall *not* prevail against it. Let not the *wickedness in high places*, nor the overflowings of ungodliness make us afraid; for He whose cause we plead, whose doctrine we preach and defend, and who hath all power in Heaven and in earth, He *is*, He *will be* with us always, even unto the end. Amen."

He lives to some purpose, who lives to God *alonè*,  
To do His will, and sacrifice *his own*;  
For this is the end, for which our being is given,  
By which alone we can secure the blessed boon of Heaven.  
This is our duty, and blessed wisdom's part,  
To wean from earth, and purify the heart;  
That from contention and strife, as from doubt set free,  
We may break the bond of error, and embrace true liberty;  
Which is the gift of the pure unchangeable Truth alone,  
For the absence of which, no earthly blessing can atone.

In pursuit of this, our doctrine and practice must *agree*,  
And *both* be sound, or there can be no true harmony.  
But if, for sound doctrine or discipline *alone*, we do contend,  
And in our *own wills*, seek either to defend,  
Opposition will be sure to arise, and as surely *defeat*  
The *unlawful* strife, which pure wisdom cannot greet—  
Whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace,  
Wherein no jarring is ever known, but in these a happy release  
Is found, from wrangling, and jangling, and detraction's hateful sound,  
From hypocritical and *partial* strife upon God's holy, hallowed ground,  
Where our unshod feet cannot with acceptance stand;  
For this is against his holy will, and Divine command,

Who was Moses' God, and whom we profess for ours.  
 And 'tis his prerogative, to guide our natural powers—  
 Unclothed of all the attributes of exalted and *unholy self*—  
 Into that channel where there's found no hireling's works, praise, or pelf,  
 That all our wisdom, glory, and strength from Him may be derived,  
 And in return, all praise, wisdom, dominion, and power, be unto Him  
 ascribed.

He *alone* can change our hearts, and make them wise and pure,  
 But if from thence we shut Him out, and in our own wisdom dwell secure,  
 Seeking *our own* ends to compass, and *our own* desires to gain,  
 Sooner or later we, in the result, shall find, and this with pain,  
 That as from Him, to lying vanities we've turned our hearts,  
 By trusting in *our own vain wisdom*—to our natural parts,—  
 So from us He will withdraw his blessed Spirit's light, and power,  
 And leave us in the dark to grope, until that blessed hour,  
 When from our eyes the blinding scales may be removed,  
 As from the Apostle's they were made to fall, and he, approved,  
 A blessed ambassador, in the name of Christ, went forth,  
 The Gospel's glad tidings to proclaim, esteeming nothing worth  
 But heavenly wisdom's power, which to *submission* led  
 A chief of sinners, for whom a Saviour's blood was shed;  
 And not for him alone, but for all the world beside;  
 That of the Lamb, we all might *united* be, a happy bride,  
 A Church, all glorious *within*, from spot and wrinkle free;  
 All of one mind, and free from strife, dwelling in true harmony.  
 Then, O then, let our united aspirations to Him ascend,  
 Teach us to know, and do thy will, that to one happy end  
 We all may seek to aim, and with a single eye to thee,  
 Pursue that glorious narrow way, from sin and error free.

Arise, ye *trembling* ones, who between the two have stood,  
 Between the fear of doing wrong and that of doing good—  
 Lost for the right, as for the wrong, by *man* condemned,  
 Your work and service be by him indignantly contemned.  
 Arise, and from the dust's defilements your garments shake,  
 That, turned from man, fresh courage you may take  
 In the holy Name and Power which dwells within,  
 And is your weapon, with which to war against the power of sin,  
 Whose rod and staff your souls can quicken and sustain,  
 So that from doubt and fear, as well as strife, you may refrain,  
 And come forth as conquerors in triumphant songs of praise  
 To Him, who, from the dust your doubting souls did raise;  
 Who, from the grave of sin did bring you forth,  
 Enabling you to see the strength of man is little worth;  
 That the fear of man is human folly, a dangerous snare,  
 Which you have need to shun; constantly to beware,

Lest in understanding ye be *not* men, in wisdom *but* a child ;  
 Into error be betrayed, and of the heavenly reward beguiled.

The Lord putteth forth, and goeth before his servants true,  
 Strengthens them to perform, and prospers what they do ;  
 Confirms their faith, renews their strength, and gives them peace,  
 And, from the hour of conflict grants, in his own time, a sure release.  
 Then *courage* take, ye *faltering* ones, and put your *armor* on,  
 Bid all your doubts and fears, your falterings and dismay begone ;  
 For Christ's your captain, your defence and strength,  
 Who to your trials, conflicts, and tossings, prescribes their length,  
 And will not permit them beyond the time to endure,  
 Which will your peace, benefit, and safety insure.  
 Perform then your duty, trusting to Him the event,  
 That He will effect the end for which the call to service's sent.  
 The Truth is mighty, and cannot, with impunity, be withstood,  
 It will preserve from harm, and protect in doing good,  
 And lead its votaries from the power of Satan, to the power of God ;  
 Into that path of safety and peace, which the redeemed have ever trod,  
 And make us one in feeling and in aim, with the followers of the Lamb,  
 And manifest to those around, that we are sent and assisted by the great I AM  
 To perform his will, his love to cherish, and his power proclaim,  
 By meek example, denial of self, and exaltation of his name,  
 By holy submission to his heavenly law, written within,  
 By embracing the way of love, and forsaking the way of sin,  
 By learning charity, and forsaking envy, jealousy, and strife,  
 By turning from the spirit of contention, to the word and power of life ;  
 And seeking in all we do, God's glory, honor, and praise,  
 E'en as the believers, who lived in ancient days ;  
 As well as many who now *in their tents abide*,  
 Having no other trust or hope the Lord beside,  
 In whom they live, and move, and seek forever to remain ;  
 Willing with Him to suffer in order with Him to reign ;  
 Not taking offence at the cross they're called to bear ;  
 But willing and seeking to follow Him, who bled and suffered there ;  
 That for the sins of the *whole world* he might atone ;  
 Who trod the wine-press of his sorrows, and prayed alone,  
 " When, of the people none were with Him " of his cup to take ;  
 To soothe his sorrows, and of his suffering burden to partake.

And have we not offended been, at his call the cross to bear,  
 And sought to shun the holy way which leads the soul to prayer ;  
 And this, not for ourselves, and our friends alone,  
 But for our enemies, as Christ to us hath shown ?  
 Have we not for a season, preferred the pleasure of sin,  
 To suffering with those who walk by the holy law within ?  
 Spurning the power of grace, and wisdom's great reward—  
 The recompense of peace for obedience to our Lord,

Who teacheth his children by "the still small voice,"  
 That to follow Him *should* be made their choice;  
 That in the way, where he doth lead his faithful ones,  
 His servants, through faith and faithfulness, are made his sons;  
 Being redeemed from the power of *self*, to do his blessed will,  
 And though reviled and despised, they are well disposed still,  
 To keep the *even tenor of their way*, and be faithful to the end,  
 Knowing, that for want of this, there's no amend;—  
 That if they turn from peace and love, to contention and strife,  
 They make to suffer and destroy the inward and precious Life:  
 Therefore, in humility and love they seek to dwell,  
 Believing and trusting in Him who doeth all things well.

These dwell in charity, putting their souls in their brother's stead,  
 Seeking to bring him to the green pastures, where they are fed;  
 Not by force, and threats, and defamation, but by the power of love,  
 Which leads the soul from things of earth, to seek the things above;  
 For this is the power of God, by which the soul is saved,  
 By which his law upon our hearts is plainly 'graved;  
 This is the attribute of Heaven, which sent his holy Son,  
 To redeem our hearts from earth, and unite them all in one,  
 Whose aspiration should ever be, "*Not my will, but thine be done.*"

O, let us seek to meet again upon *one common ground*,  
 Where *unity, peace, and love*, and all their sister graces do abound;  
 Let us strive to turn again to Him, whom we have offended,  
 That all the breaches may be healed, and the Truth defended.  
 Let us seek to become a united, valiant, and happy baud,  
 That the Gospel may again be preached from land to land,  
 And nought remain, our peace to mar, or the Truth to stain,  
 Or lead us back to the world's unholy strife again.  
 O let us bring all our crowns and lay them at Jesus' feet,  
 That He may be with us, and crown us whom we meet,  
 With his own Spirit's light and power, which turneth water into wine,  
 And a table richly spreadeth in our midst, with bread Divine;  
 Giveth us to partake of angels' food, a plenteous feast,  
 And blesseth all who worship Him, from greatest to the least.  
 Let us from *our own wisdom* cease, and ask and seek of Him  
 Who giveth liberally, filling the vessel to the brim;  
 Giveth us all our present state can bear, and upbraideth not  
 For what we do not know, or for what we have forgot;  
 But leads us on to seek for more where it is to be found,  
 And teacheth us that trouble is not of dust, or affliction of the ground,  
 But for some wise purpose, both are sent, and convinceth us of this,  
 That they are to lead to good, or repentance of deeds done amiss.

O, let us worship in our daily walks, the God of earth, the God of Heaven,  
 That our conversation and our deeds may savor of the holy leaven;

That in our mingling with the world, our lives may be its salt,  
 Our every action, word, and thought, free from blame or fault.  
 This is close doctrine, but practical it will be found,  
 And of our certain hope, to be the only immutable ground ;  
 This is the foundation upon which prophets and apostles built,  
 And "the habit of sinning lessens *not* the guilt."  
 We cannot at once to perfection attain, but by degrees  
 We shall be strengthened to turn from sin, our Lord to please ;  
 And grow as doth the corn, from blade to ear, to the full corn in the ear,  
 Until at last we're brought to do all things in holy fear ;  
 To stand resigned to the will of Heaven, and walk in love,  
 Seeking, before all things else, wisdom and power from above,  
 By which alone we can prevail against the power of sin ;  
 Against which stands the law, light, and power of the Spirit within,  
 By which our hands are taught to war, and our fingers to fight  
 Against all that tends to obscure or extinguish the inward Light,  
 In which our way to heaven is plainly seen ;  
 Our view of which nothing intercepts, but sin between  
 Us and our heavenly King, which a mountain will ever stand,  
 Until removed by Him who interposed his mighty hand  
 To remove the scales from the Apostle's eyes, when blind,  
 And in his own wisdom sought the heavenly way to find—  
 Making havoc of the Church, and causing many to blaspheme,  
 Forsaking the law of his God, to follow his own wicked scheme,  
 Until a voice was heard from an unmistakable source,  
 Which taught him the law of entreaty, and to forsake the use of force.  
 Unto this he gave instant heed, and turned from violence and persecution,  
 To beseeching, entreating, and persuading ; what a revolution !  
 And with what success were his labors crowned,  
 After he was brought upon the *true and only* Gospel ground !  
 How changed was he, from bitter hate, contention, and strife—  
 When he became the servant of the Author of eternal life !—  
 To meekness, gentleness, and love, seeking the wanderer to restore,  
 By and through the same heavenly Power, which is now the door,  
 And by which *his* soul had been redeemed from earth,  
 And brought to experience a new and heavenly birth.  
 How did he exalt the virtue of charity, above all others, great,  
 The very principle which he had turned into bitter hate !  
 He saw, as all must see, if with acceptance they will stand,  
 That charity, *above all else*, is the end of the Divine command ;  
 That it is the bond of perfectness, the ground of peace,  
 From which none who *are* true Christians can ever cease.  
 Therefore, on its errands he freely and *availingly* went,  
 As, upon doing *his heavenly Father's will*, his mind was truly bent ;  
 Whose cause he had espoused by Divine command,

And in its promotion was led by *the Lord's own hand*—  
 Assisting the weak, encouraging the strong, warning the ungodly,  
 Performing the work faithfully, and preaching the word boldly,  
 Yet taking heed, lest, while he preached to others, he, himself, should fall;  
 Trusting in the power of Him who was his all in all.  
 Thus was the holy Apostle turned from darkness to light,  
 And strengthened in his heavenly Master's cause to fight;  
 Putting off the armor of the flesh for the power of Love,  
 And being wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove,  
 Was enabled to *gather and restore, to persuade and prevail*,  
 And, in the end, was blessed with the hope that entereth into that within  
 the vail.

The good fight he had fought against the enemies of his soul,  
 Against the power of sin, darkness, and unbelief; obtaining the control  
 Of his angry passions, which led to the hating of mankind,  
 And to the persecution of the Church, in a spirit most unkind.  
 And of his victory, this song of deliverance and praise he sung,  
 Saying, the good fight I've fought; the faith have kept, and the righteous  
 crown have won;

The crown of eternal life which all awaits, who love the Lord's appearing;  
 Who, in watching, waiting, and praying, are continually fearing,  
 Lest from his holy love, and light, and power, their hearts shall turn,  
 His law to mock and disregard, and his blessed grace to spurn.

There's nought on earth that's worth the seeking, but his will to suffer and  
 to do,

Who condescends to be with those who meet to worship Him, however few,  
 And in his mercy these to cover with his holy canopy of love and power,  
 Inspiring their hearts with *the spirit of prayer*, that for the solemn hour  
 He might our souls prepare, and make them meet for that blest abode  
 Where nought unholy or impure can ever find its way,  
 But all is sweetness, purity, and love, a bright eternal day;  
 Where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest  
 In the home of the loved and loving, with peace and joy forever blest.

We read that in the course of the reformation which was  
 brought about through the instrumentality of holy men, raised  
 up for the promotion of Truth in the earth, "the doctrines of  
 Divine grace were exalted on the downfall of merits, and  
 light, liberty, and moderation, became the glory of the Church.  
 But to evince how insufficient all outward reformation is to  
 attain its end, where the heart is unrenewed by charity and  
 the spirit of a sound mind, our forefathers were no sooner  
 rescued from one yoke of bondage, than they entangled  
 themselves and disturbed the peace of the Church with dis-

putes about the most indifferent things, so that opinions concerning these, proved of greater force to divide their affections, than the agreement in fundamental doctrines to preserve them in brotherly love: and, as if to teach us not to place our confidence in the best framed constitutions, and to instruct us in our need of continual watchfulness, Arminianism got footing amongst us, and met with encouragement; the dignity and powers of human nature began to be more highly thought of, and men's attention was called from the *inside* to the *outside* of religion, and more pains was employed to decorate the *form* than to urge the *power* of godliness: nor did it a little help religion on its way down-hill, that some who talked *loudly* of grace and the Spirit showed themselves men intoxicated with the dregs of earthly policy, thirsting after dominion and turning *faith into faction*.

This served to confirm prejudices already conceived against doctrines good in themselves, but disgraced by the practices of some that *held the Truth in unrighteousness*; add to this, that an *overstrained* rigor in some things, and an *awkward* formality of behavior in many who assumed the *garb*, but wanted the *life* of religion to give it comeliness and grace, proved so disgusting to the opposite party, that, to avoid the name of precisians, they cast off the very appearance of religion, and so turned liberty into licentiousness. Everything that looked like piety was termed *Puritanism*. *Politics* and *polemics* began now to have a great share in the religion of the times, and this occasioned a variable and time-serving kind of religion, and a *mad party zeal* ran away with the charity of *both sides*, and true religion was lost in the scuffle.

“The enemies of [spiritual] religion triumphed at beholding these *animosities* and *divisions* in the Church, and, from such inconstancy and change of principles, fetched arguments in favor of infidelity. They considered the ministers as laboring more to support the credit of a *party*, than the interests of *true piety*, and were tempted to think that nothing more was meant by the Church than that *outward* constitution of it, from which they derive their power and preferments. The prevailing [religion] with many was a kind of Chris-



tianity which had nothing of Jesus Christ in it; it came *not* tinctured with the Spirit of the Gospel, and therefore produced no spiritual effects in the *temper* of the times."

A writer in speaking of the ministry at the time above referred to, expresses himself thus: "It is verily a fault in too many of the public teachers of our times, that their sermons are *moral harangues* generally, as if they were preaching at old Rome or Athens, and their auditors were all infidels. We see the bad effects of this in more accounts than one. The constant insisting on *nothing but* morality, hath inspired men's heads with the notion that [spiritual] religion is of little consideration and worth; and this hath been one great occasion of Deism."

Do we not behold, in this account of the trials and difficulties which were thrown in the way of the early reformers, by both the unrighteousness and self-righteousness of men, a picture of our own case, as a people, professing above all others to have been brought out of all dependence upon man, and who were, in the beginning, raised up to testify to the power and truthfulness of the inward teachings of the Spirit, as superior in their extent and force to any outward instruction? Has not the work which was begun in faithfulness to the requirements, teachings, and leadings of the Holy Spirit, been in a great measure frustrated, through the turning aside of many amongst us, to a dependence upon the wisdom and teachings of human reason, causing us to withhold the sacrifice of our own wills, upon the altar of Truth; to depart from the faith by which Abraham was made willing to offer up his son Isaac, in obedience to the Divine command, trusting in the wisdom and mercy of God, to the setting aside of his own creaturely will, reason, and affection, for the sake of the blessing which he believed to be the reward of faithfulness.

This is one of the most remarkable trials of faith upon record, and we may remember what followed this act of obedience to the command of the Lord, how that the dearest object of his natural affection was spared unto Abraham, after his faith and faithfulness had been tested, and an offering was

prepared for him in place thereof; and because of his unwavering trust, and unhesitating obedience to the voice of the Lord, he received the promise from him "that in blessing he would bless him, and in multiplying he would multiply his seed as the stars of heaven, and that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed, *because, said he, thou hast obeyed my voice.*" Obedience to the voice of the Lord is more acceptable to him than all the sacrifices which human wisdom can invent or offer, and to hearken, than the fat of rams.

It is very clear that everything as it relates to ourselves, or the Church, never have been, and never can be just as we would have them, if the ordering of them were left to ourselves—while there remains in us any of the imperfections of human nature; and, therefore, that we are bound to bear and forbear until the Lord shall see meet to release us from the state of probation through which we are passing, either to acceptance with him, or to never-ending condemnation. From the earliest ages of the Church, there have been false brethren, or hypocritical professors of religion, who, under the cloak of a zeal for the Truth, have betrayed and persecuted its friends as well as its enemies, regarding the accomplishment of their own wills above every other or higher consideration, for which they have been willing to sacrifice, not only their own peace, but that of the Church; there have ever been the servants and prophets of Baal, upon whose offerings the fire of the Lord would not descend, but who still persisted against rebuke and entreaty, to offer the sacrifice of fools; and these, as far as we can know, have, ever since the days of Elijah, outnumbered the Lord's anointed; but all these ever have been, and ever will be judged by the Head of the Church, whose law is mocked, and whose grace is spurned by their self-seeking and self-exaltation, even as Uzza was for putting his hand unbidden to the ark; for He knoweth who they are that do their alms to be seen of men, seeking the honor which cometh from them, more than that which cometh from God.

With these, and their evil and offensive works, we are

bound to bear, except so far as they can be subdued or overcome, through our instrumentality, by observing the *order* and *direction of Truth*, upon which we believe the discipline of our Society to be founded; and every departure from these, in order to effect the end we may have in view, will only tend to increase our trials, and bring condemnation upon ourselves; for with these we are bound to bear, until the Truth shall open the way for our deliverance from them, even as the Head of the Church himself bears with his enemies, seeking to reconcile and restore them, until their measure of iniquity is filled up, and they have separated themselves *entirely* from him, *beyond* the hope of return. Then, notwithstanding the predominance of these, let us bear in mind the encouraging language of the Lord to Elijah, when he was led to complain that the enemies of Truth had thrown down its altars and slain its prophets, and that he was left alone, and his life was in jeopardy; for we may believe that there are yet thousands preserved amongst us, who are engaged to acknowledge and serve the true and living God.

In the exercise of the discipline of the Church we are bound to have long patience with offenders against it, seeking to preserve or restore them, rather than hastily to cast them off from membership with the body, in order to escape the labor and suffering which their cases may occasion; and this should be the only line of division between us and them, as this is the acknowledged rule by which we are to be governed, both in preserving and restoring the hopeful, and in testifying against and disowning the wayward and incorrigible, who have forfeited their right of membership, through a wilful disregard of the order and discipline of Truth, which demands the subordination of members to the body and the submission of them "one to another in the fear of God, and to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake;" that they should "be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; be of the same mind one toward another; bless them which persecute them, bless, and *curse not*; rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep; recompense to no man evil for evil; as

much as lieth in them, live peaceably with all men ; *avenge not themselves*, but rather give place to wrath, and if their enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink ; be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good ; be subject unto the higher powers ; render to all their dues ; receive him that is weak in the faith, *bearing* the infirmities of the weak, not to please *themselves* but their neighbor for his good to edification, even as Christ pleased not himself ; follow *after* the things that *make for peace*, and things whereby one may edify another, and with one mind and one mouth glorify God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ;" for, by thus doing, we shall be preserved in that love and unity, which we profess as the bond of our peace ; in that faith and fellowship which is our victory over the world, and from that enmity, hatred, and unbelief, by which the spirit of the world is seeking to separate us from our holy Head, and one from another, to the jeopardizing of our hope of salvation by Jesus Christ, the minister and mediator of the new covenant of grace and truth, which come by Him who hath fulfilled the outward law which came by Moses, and allowed a retaliation for injuries, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," and who now teacheth us that we should "resist not evil, but overcome evil with good," in tenderheartedness forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgiveth us, and as we would wish to be forgiven by our brethren, for offences committed *against* them, or against the Truth of which they are the advocates and supporters.

This is the blessed and glorious Gospel dispensation under which we live and by which the law is written in our hearts, "teaching us, that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world ; looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." And we profess to believe that it was through the influence and power of this Gospel of grace, that we, as a people, were raised up to testify to the spirituality of the

Christian religion, and enabled to prescribe those rules for the outward government of the Church, which are to be found in our Discipline, unto which every member of it is bound to submit; and if he refuses to comply therewith, after tender and persuasive admonition, it is the duty, as well as the interest of the Church, to testify against him, as being no longer a member of it; and neither he, or any member of his particular meeting, or of any other co-ordinate body, has a right to question the propriety of the act, provided it has been regularly performed. From the Monthly Meeting he can appeal to the Quarterly Meeting, and from the Quarterly Meeting to the Yearly Meeting of which he is a member, if he believes he has been unjustly or irregularly dealt with, and the judgment of the latter *must necessarily be final*; for if one co-ordinate body is allowed to annul the doings of another co-ordinate body, where will be the end of contention and confusion?

It is a fixed and unalterable law of all good government, that there should be a tribunal, from whose decision there can be no appeal, and this cannot be violated, but at the peril of the peace, order, and harmony of Society; wherefore, we are admonished in Holy Writ, to be subject to the powers that be, lest by striving unlawfully we fail of receiving the crown of our labors; and it is a presumptuous and dangerous undertaking for an individual, or individuals, to rise up in rebellion against the religious body of which they are members, as we have witnessed in all the separations which have occurred in our Society, since we became a people, for whatever reason, or under whatever pretext it may have been done, whether the support of infidelity, or defence of the Truth.

The great Head of the Church is a God of order, and not of confusion; the source of unity and harmony, and not the author of divisions and discord; the teacher of love and forbearance, and not the advocate of strife and contention; "the Prince of Peace," the hater of him that soweth the seeds of discord among brethren, and the despiser of him who sayeth, in his heart, "*Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou.*" These, said he, *are a smoke in my nose, a fire that*

burneth all the day. Behold, I *will* recompense, even recompense their iniquities into their own bosom." The Lord is a God of mercy, and a rewarder of the merciful, upon whom he has pronounced a blessing, even that of mercy in return; he is a judge of the cruel, withholding mercy from those who have shown none to others; he pardoneth iniquity and passeth by our transgressions, as we confess them and repent; but he will not forgive the trespasses of those, who forgive not those that trespass against them.

Now, if the Lord be our God, we shall be found in the exercise of patience, charity, forbearance, and mercy, submitting ourselves to *his* law and government, and seeking to promote "*peace on earth and good will to men*," withholding our hands from the shedding of blood, and the receiving of bribes, despising the gain of oppressions, stopping our ears from hearing of blood, and shutting our eyes from seeing evil, we shall behold Jerusalem a *quiet* habitation, and acknowledge the Lord as our Judge, our Lawgiver, and our King, believing that He will save us; that we shall be forgiven our iniquity, according to his promise to his faithful children; we shall seek to *forget* those things that are behind, pressing forward towards those that are before, that we may have unity and peace in Christ, our Holy Head, who is God over all, blessed for evermore; and, finally, we shall be clothed with humility, meekness, and love, even as was the Captain of our salvation, in his personal appearance amongst men, when he declared that he came not to do *his own* will, but that of his *Father* who had sent him; that his doctrine was not his own, and that God was his Judge in all things; that he judged no man, and condemned no man; that he sought not to destroy the world, but to save it; not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; that he was the good Shepherd, who giveth his life for the sheep; and that he came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly. "Happy is that people that is in such a case, whose God is the Lord." "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

Let us, then, examine the course that has been taken

amongst us, by which legitimate and co-ordinate bodies have been deprived of that religious and reciprocal intercourse one with another, which is essential to the unity, order, and harmony of our Christian brotherhood, that we may be enabled to see whether it is consistent with that universal righteousness and love, by which we profess to be exercised; whether it is in accordance with the Truth as it is in Jesus, our holy Head, in which there is neither rent nor division; for his Church is his spiritual body, of which his outward body was the antetype; and this was covered with a seamless garment, knit together from top to bottom, until it was parted by his crucifiers, who crucified him between two thieves, one of whom railed on him, saying, in the spirit of unbelief, "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us;" but the other rebuked his unbelieving companion in suffering, saying, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we, indeed, justly, for we receive the just reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss."

And have *we* not crucified the Lord of life and glory afresh, putting Him to an open shame, and parted his garments amongst us, casting lots upon his vesture, saying within ourselves, Lo, He is here, and lo, He is there, with this party or with that party, who is claiming the covering of his name? Are not the same two spirits in our midst which were found in the two malefactors, the one denying his power, and spurning his grace, and the other acknowledging them, and our need of the help thereof, as well as the justice of our condemnation under sin and transgression; and praying for the mediation and intercession of our holy-Redeemer, who is now suffering with and for us, the just with and for the unjust; who is the just, and perfect, and blameless sufferer, and yet the justifier of every sinful soul, who, through faith and repentance, are brought to the acknowledgment of their sinfulness, and of his perfection and power, and to seek the mediation of his Holy Spirit?

O, that the scales of ignorance, which have so long obscured our vision, may be removed from our eyes, that we be enabled to see who it is that is brought under suffering and reproach,

through our persecutions one of another, even as the holy Apostle did, when he heard the voice from heaven, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" and to that state of trembling in which he queried with his Divine Master, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Then would it be shown unto us, as it was unto him, that we should "arise and be baptized, and wash away our sins, calling on the name of the Lord, and how great things we must suffer for his name's sake;" and we should be brought to the confession of our sins, even as was the Apostle, when he said, "I verily thought I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, which thing I also did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them, and I punished them oft in every Synagogue, and *compelled them to blaspheme*, and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities."

Now, in this confession of the Apostle, we may behold a picture of our doings, of which we are bound, as he did, to repent; turning from self-justification and persecution, to self-abasement and persuasion; for the Spirit by which we profess to be led, taketh its kingdom by entreaty and *not* by force; and the power of the Gospel is sufficient for the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan, and is the only one by which it can availingly be done; therefore, let him that ministereth, do it in the ability which God giveth, for vain is the strength and wisdom of man, in the work of redemption and reconciliation, which can only be effected by "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world"—and who, with his followers, shall ever have the victory,—by the gentle and inoffensive power of heavenly wisdom and love, such as was found in the Apostle, when, after his conversion, he appeared, under accusation, before the Roman King, to speak in his own defence, declaring what his eyes had seen, and his ears had heard of the doings and sayings of the Lord, which caused the King to acknowledge unto him, "Almost thou *persuadest* me to be a Christian." And



it was the same power that operated through him, upon the King, which caused Felix, the governor, to tremble, as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.

And this same Apostle was afterwards led to declare, that the weapons of a Christian's warfare were "*not* carnal, but mighty through God," and therefore spiritual, reaching the heart, and penetrating the soul, to the destruction of the power of enmity, which warreth against God and his children; to the bruising of the serpent's head, according to the Scripture testimony of "the seed of the woman," which is the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Gospel, the Spirit of Truth; which is "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and *also* to the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God, who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who, by *patient continuance in well-doing*, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, *eternal life*; but unto them that are *contentious, and do not obey the truth*, but obey unrighteousness, *indignation, and wrath; tribulation and anguish* upon every soul of man that *doeth evil*; but *glory, honor, and peace* to every man that *worketh good*."

And furthermore, the Apostle testified that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who *hold the Truth in unrighteousness*; because that which may be known of God *is* manifest in them, so that they are without excuse, because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him *not as God*, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be *wise*, they became *fools*, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a *reprobate mind*, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, maliciousness; full of *envy, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, without*

*natural affection, implacable, unmerciful*; who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, *not only* do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. Therefore, thou art *inexcusable*, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest; for wherein thou judgest *another*, thou condemnest *thyself*; for thou that judgest doest the same things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth *thee* to repentance?"

And again he declared that "*all have sinned* and come short of the glory of God," who, says he, is the God of the Jews, as well as of the Gentiles, seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith; for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord is rich unto all that call upon him, for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. But said he, "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" But notwithstanding their ignorance, unbelief, and disobedience, he declared unto his brethren, his heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel to be, that they might be saved; bearing them record that they had a zeal of God, but *not according to knowledge*, and that being ignorant of *God's* righteousness, and going about to establish their *own* righteousness, they had not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God; for said he, "Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," and that "the righteousness which is of faith, speaketh on this wise, Say *not* in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy tongue the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe in thy heart* that *God hath raised him from the dead*, thou shalt

be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the tongue confession is made unto salvation; for the Scripture saith, Whosoever shall believe on him shall not be ashamed."

This is a fundamental doctrine of the religion of Jesus Christ, which we profess, and which is an *inward* experience of the work of grace, such as the holy Apostle had, which inspired him with the belief that God had *not* cast away his people, notwithstanding the *outward* appearance of general apostasy; for, after reminding them of their disobedience of, and alienation from God, he useth this language of encouragement. "I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid: for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath *not* cast away his people whom he foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left *alone*, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto *him*? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have *not* bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so, *at the present time*, there is a remnant according to the election of grace; and if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace."

This is plain and encouraging language, and O how different from the doctrine which has been promulgated amongst us of latter time, by which the works of the flesh have been exalted above the power of grace, leading to the belief that the outward testimony in favor of truth, and in opposition to error, was sufficient to atone for the want of Gospel love, faith, and obedience; for almost any departure in conduct; reversing the testimony of Holy Writ, that "charity covereth a multitude of sins;" that "love covereth all sins;" that "he that covereth a transgression seeketh love;" that "love worketh no ill, and is therefore the fulfilling of the law," and that "faith worketh by love;" whereby we have been betrayed, through the subtlety of our unwearied enemy, into the disposition and practices that were found in the holy

Apostle before his conversion, when he thought with himself that he ought to do many things *contrary* to the Truth, which thing he did, persecuting and making havoc of the Church, being persuaded by the evil one, that God was served thereby. But let us bear in mind how marvellously he was undeceived, being shown that he was opening afresh the wounds of the blessed Redeemer, whose life had been made a sacrifice for the ungodly, by whom it was destroyed; for the Church is his body, and if even one member thereof suffer, He as well as all the other members suffer with it; for in all our afflictions he is afflicted, and he partaketh with his people in their sorrows, as well as in their rejoicing; and with him, as members of his body, we have fellowship in these.

“ Were love in these the world’s last doting years,  
As frequent as the want of it appears,  
The churches warmed, they would no longer hold  
Such *frozen* figures, *stiff* as they are cold;  
Each heart would quit its prison in the breast,  
And flow in free communion with the rest.  
No [unrelenting] disputants would take the field,  
Sure not to conquer, and sure not to yield;  
Both sides deceived, if rightly understood,  
Persecuting each other for the church’s good.

’Tis time, however, if the case stand thus,  
For us plain folks, and all who side with us,  
To build our altars, confident and bold,  
And say, as stern Elijah said of old,  
The strife now stands upon a fair award:  
If Israel’s Lord be God, then serve the Lord;  
If He be silent, faith is all a whim;  
Then Baal is the God, and worship him.

O, for a world in principle as chaste  
As this is gross and selfish! over which  
Custom and prejudice shall bear no sway,  
That govern all things here, shouldering aside  
The meek and modest Truth, and forcing her  
To seek a refuge from the tongue of Strife  
In nooks obscure, far from the ways of men;  
Where violence shall never lift the sword,  
Nor cunning justify the proud man’s wrong;  
Where he that fills an office shall esteem  
The occasion it presents of doing good

More than human praise ; where censure shall speak  
 Seldom, and never but as wisdom prompts  
 And equity ; not jealous more to guard  
 A worthless form, than to decide aright ;  
 Where opinion shall not sanctify abuse,  
 Nor an unholy zeal, or an empty profession  
 With lean performance, ape the work of Love.

We read that it was through sufferings that the Captain of our salvation was made perfect ; and for our sakes that he took flesh and dwelt amongst men, “that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil ; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage ; for verily he took not on him the nature of angels ; but he took on him the seed of Abraham” (the form of a servant) ; for it is written, that “it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a *merciful* high priest in things pertaining to God, to make *reconciliation* for the sins of the people ; for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, *he is able to succor them that are tempted.*” And it is further declared, that “both *he* that sanctifieth, and *they* who are sanctified, *are* all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren ; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren ; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.” What an example of meekness and humility ! What an evidence of love for the brethren, and of allegiance unto God, the Father and fountain of all our sure mercies !

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,” saith Paul, “*consider* the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus ; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as Moses was faithful in all his house ; for this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as *he who hath builded the house* hath more honor than the *house.*” The spiritual and inward light is, indeed, as far above the written and outward law, as the light of the sun, in the outward creation, is above the light of the moon ; for, in both cases, the inferior cannot be known or seen, without the aid of the superior ; and hence, the vanity and foolishness of men who seek to justify themselves and their doings

by the letter of Scripture, while they are ignorant of the Light from heaven ; while they are devoid of the meek and self-denying Spirit of our holy Redeemer, who, when he took upon him a body of flesh and dwelt amongst men, made self of no reputation, ascribing all judgment, power, and goodness unto God the Father, who had sent him to perform his gracious and holy will, saying, "my doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me, and if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine ;" and, in reply to his disciples, who queried with him, "Lord, wilt thou, at this time, restore again the kingdom of Israel ? It is not for you to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in *his own* power ; and, when one addressed him, Good Master, he answered, Why callest thou me good ? there *is none good but one*, that is God ; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He said unto him, which ? Jesus said Thou shalt commit no murder ; thou shalt not commit adultery ; thou shalt not steal ; thou shalt not bear *false witness* ; honor thy father and thy mother ; and, thou shalt *love thy neighbor as thyself*. The young man saith unto him, All these have I kept from my youth up ; what lack I yet ? Jesus saith unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven ; and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful ; for he had great possessions."

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily, I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." If we will be the humble and acceptable followers of Christ, we must, indeed, be willing to be emptied of all *self-righteousness and self-sufficiency*, of all outward dependence either upon the riches or wisdom of this world, or the deeds of the flesh, and to become of the number of *the poor in spirit*, who have no might, wisdom, or riches of their own ; and who regard themselves but as the stewards of God, bound unto the law and testimony of the Spirit of Christ in *their own* hearts ; for theirs, and theirs alone, is the kingdom of

heaven; for nothing that is earthly, or of ourselves, can ever be permitted to pass the narrow gate which leadeth to the city of habitation, where the spirits of just men made perfect are permitted to dwell, ascribing all honor and glory, goodness and mercy, dominion and power, unto the Lord God, and the Lamb forever.

If we expect or desire to be accepted of God, in the great day of final account, we must be prepared to make the humble acknowledgment, that we are unprofitable servants; however far we may have submitted to the work of Divine grace, in and through us; and that it is of his mercy, and this alone, that we are saved; we must come down from the heights of self-exaltation, upon which we have been pleading the mighty and wonderful works which we have wrought, as the ground of our hope and claim of salvation, saying, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and, in Thy name, cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" for he will profess unto such self-righteous souls, "I never knew you," saying, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity!"

Let us, each one for ourselves, examine our own spirits and conduct, that we may be enabled to see wherein we have forsaken the sure foundation, by seeking to build our hopes upon the deeds of the flesh, by which *no man* shall be justified; wherein we have been setting up the works of our own hands, as an image, before which to bow down and worship; wherein we have made of the outward testimony for the truth, and against error, either upon the right hand or upon the left, a chariot with horses upon which we have been seeking to override those who have stood in the way of the attainment of our selfish ends; for the Lord will surely bring those into judgment, who have been strengthening themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and trusting in the shadow of Egypt; for the strength of Pharaoh shall be their shame, and their trust in the shadow of Egypt their confusion. For thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quiet and confidence shall be your strength; and ye would not; but ye said, No; for we will *flee* upon

horses; therefore shall ye flee; and we will ride upon the *swift*; therefore, shall they that pursue you be swift. One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; and at the rebuke of five shall ye flee; till ye shall be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on a hill.

“And therefore will the Lord wait that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted that He may have mercy upon you; for the Lord *is* a God of judgment; blessed are they that wait for Him. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers; and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.”

Now, my dear friends, though we have been sorely chastened for our disobedience to the *inward law* of righteousness, yet the Lord *is* waiting to be gracious, and will yet manifest his glorious power and heavenly love amongst us, being merciful to our unrighteousness; remembering our sins no more; if we will only turn away from the idolatry of self, and worship Him alone, following the direction of his blessed teachings *in our own hearts*, not looking out therefrom after the lo heres, and the lo theres, which the enemy of our unity and peace has been sounding, and is continuing to proclaim amongst us, in order to unsettle and divide those who should be as one family in the Church of Christ.

If it so be, that our religious views, as a people, have been misrepresented, and our testimony for the Truth, and against error, resisted and rejected, because it has not, in all cases, been regularly borne, or because it was not in itself deemed necessary, by many who had not been brought, so clearly as others, to see the nature and tendency of the innovations upon the Christian views to which we profess to hold, or because it was attempted by some who had never known the way of life and salvation; who had never experienced that change of heart by which the old man with his deeds is put off, and the new man, Christ Jesus, put on; and, therefore, were not



qualified to understand the things of God, even that "the end of the commandment *is* charity, out of a *pure heart*, and of a *good conscience*, and of faith *unfeigned* ; from which some, having served, have turned aside unto vain jangling ; desiring to be teachers of the law ; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm : " if it be so, that our profession has been thus reproached, and our testimony thus balked, by irregularity and ignorance, let us receive it as an evidence of our weakness and unfaithfulness, and not seek to cast the blame of our divisions and confusion where it does not belong, even *entirely* upon the introduction, adoption, and defence of objectionable views, or a quiet acquiescence in their adoption and spread ; but rather acknowledge the share which the exercise of an unsanctified zeal, both upon the right hand and upon the left, has had in the occasion of them.

The present afflicted state of the Church has, no doubt, been permitted, to manifest unto us our weaknesses and our departures from primitive simplicity, faith, and purity, as well as to lead us back to the place of beginning, where prayer was wont to be made, in which the true believers were enabled to unite ; desiring that the kingdom of God might come, and his will be done in our hearts, as it is in heaven ; that through the instrumentality of his children, men might be turned unto righteousness ; might be turned " from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Christ ; " for this was the mission which was given unto the Apostle, after he had witnessed the light from heaven to shine round about him, and had heard a voice speaking unto him, and saying, " Saul, Saul, *why* persecutest thou me ? "

" Prayer is the vital breath of faith,  
Which makes the soul to heaven arise ;  
Neglecting this the *man* may live,  
But oh ! how soon the *Christian* dies."

Of the duty and necessity of inward and fervent prayer, no truly devoted Christian can be ignorant ; for this is not

only his *constant* exercise, but the ground of all his true and substantial enjoyment; for it is through this that he is led beside the still waters, and made to lie down in the green pastures of life and peace, where nothing can harm or make afraid; for this raiseth the soul above the fear of all evil, either from within or from without, even to that condition in which the royal Psalmist was enabled to testify, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." It was through prayer that David was brought into this happy experience; for how often do we find him breathing unto his God, in the fervent spirit of supplication, saying, "Lead me, O Lord, in *thy* righteousness, because of mine enemies. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak. Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. Preserve me, O God; for in *thee* do I put my trust. Be *not far* from me, O Lord: O my strength, *haste* thee to help me." These, and many other petitions, were raised in his heart, before he was brought into the experience above described, or before he makes mention of it.

And we have the blessed Redeemer as an example in the exercise of this duty, who prayed when under suffering, on this wise. "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." And he exhorted his disciples to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation; which was, and ever will continue to be, the engagement of his true followers, not only on their own account, but one for another, as said the Apostle, "We will give ourselves *continually* to prayer;" and he exhorted, that prayers be made, for *all men*, and desired for himself the prayers of his brethren, saying, "I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and that my service, which I have for Jerusalem, may be accepted of the saints; that I may come

unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed." And when Peter was in prison "prayer was made without ceasing, of the Church unto God for him;" and Paul testified that his "prayer unto God for Israel was," notwithstanding their ignorance and disobedience, "that they might be saved."

And thus should prayer be offered up by us, through the Holy Spirit, which helpeth our infirmities, and teacheth and enableth us to pray acceptably and availingly, not only for ourselves, but for the Church of Christ, that it might again put on the garment of love and praise, and become a united body, having but one Head; for "the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous, availeth much;" and the captivity of Job was turned when he prayed for his friends; by the prayer of Elias, who was a man subject to like passions as we are, the heaven was made to withhold rain from the earth, and to give it again, so that she brought forth her fruit; and it is written, that by prayer and fasting men were enabled to cast out devils. Therefore how doth it behoove us to cherish the spirit of prayer, that the Church may again arise from the dust and put on her beautiful garments; that she may not be given to reproach.

The covering of the Spirit of our holy Redeemer would be as evidently witnessed amongst us, as in days that are past, if our hearts were made a house of prayer; if we would be willing to have all that the Lord's holy controversy is with, cast out therefrom, in order that they might become the abode of the Prince of Peace, whom we are professing to worship and serve; if we would only be willing to lay aside all malice, envy, hatred, and jealousy; all partial affections and desires, all strife and contention, and every disposition of mind which tends to destroy that feeling of love, which is the badge of true discipleship; to eat out and destroy the precious life of Truth, by which we are enabled to feel the presence of evil and good, and to distinguish the one from the other; and to obscure the heavenly light of the Gospel, by which the approaches and existence of error are clearly seen.

It is by prayer that we are to experience our own wills to be slain, and the pride and haughtiness of our hearts laid low; for this is the sum and substance of all true and acceptable prayer, "Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done." Ah, we must come to the adoption of this, in sincerity of heart, before our works will be accepted by Him, whose right it is to rule and to reign in our hearts, both to will and to do of His own good pleasure; for, "He will not give his glory to another, or his praise to graven images;" but the honor and the power, the glory and the praise, must all be ascribed unto Him; for He is ever worthy of these, and of our confidence and worship, in which, were we to become faithful, He would restore us to that harmony and peace, which we once enjoyed as a blessing from Him.

The days in which we live are, indeed, evil, therefore should we be willing and engaged to double our diligence, in order that our election, as well as our calling, be made sure; for our foundations are being effectually tried, and the approved amongst us will be made manifest in due time; it will be shown who they are, that through faith, patience, and prayer, are continuing with the blessed Master, in his temptations; not striving after deliverance in their own wills, way, and time, but rather seeking resignedly to suffer with His body, the Church, casting their burden upon Him, faithfully trusting in His overruling and sustaining power, who hath never said to the wrestling seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain; but ever hath kept His covenant with His people, "Seek, and ye *shall* find; all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye *shall* receive; ask and ye *shall* receive, that your joy may be full."

These promises have His truly devoted servants ever found to be verified in their experience; that for the crying of the *poor*, and the sighing of the *needy*, He doth arise, with healing in His wings. But the rich and the full, who feel no necessity or sorrow, are permitted to become a prey to the enemy of their souls; those who are rich in their own wisdom, and full of the strength and zeal of the creature, are allowed to continue empty of the wisdom, power, and love

of the Gospel, by which the power of enmity is overcome and slain in our hearts; of the precious seed and word of life, which shall wound the serpent's head, whenever it shall be raised to bite and destroy, to scatter and divide, and to reproach and make desolate the heritage of God, which is His people, amongst whom; as they are united in Christ to the one body, of which He is the adorable Head; He delighteth to dwell, manifesting His love, mercy, and power unto them in a marvellous manner.

And we have indubitable evidence that, notwithstanding our many short-comings and backslidings, we are not yet a forsaken people, and that the great Head of the Church is waiting to be gracious. He has been merciful to our unrighteousness, and will blot out our sins from the book of remembrance, if we will only turn again to Him whom we have offended, by turning aside to the spirit of the world, whereby we have been led into contention and strife, to the disordering and confusing of the affairs of the Church. It is confidently believed that there are very few amongst us, who would be willing *knowingly* to lend their influence or aid in support of any views or measures, which would tend to balk, or let fall, the testimony which we profess to bear to the spirituality of the religion of Jesus Christ.

But, notwithstanding this, it must be seen and acknowledged that we have been led, as the Apostle testified of himself, to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, believing that God was served thereby; that, through human frailty and dependence, we have erred in many ways from the peaceful paths of wisdom, through which we have been brought into contention and confusion, and under a cloud of darkness, which nothing short of the Power by which we were raised up to be a people, can remove.

Inasmuch as our unsettlement, divisions, and confusion are not occasioned entirely by the fault of any one individual or party in Society, but by the multitude of errors, and individuals therein, which have each had their share in bringing down the judgment of Heaven upon us, let us, each one for himself, examine our own hearts in the light of Truth, that

we may be enabled to see what is required at our hands, in order that the body may be restored to soundness, and to the Divine favor which we once enjoyed to so eminent a degree, as to make us a light and an example to the world around us, by our unity, love, and peace, in which we were enabled to bear a living and convincing testimony to the spirituality, and the uniting, saving power of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. O, let us come down from the mountain of self-exaltation, from whose height we may have been looking *down* upon others, who, in the Divine sight, may be more acceptable than ourselves; for many that are first shall be last, and the last first; the mountains shall be brought down, and the valleys exalted, in the day of the Lord's holy visitation and power; he that exalteth himself shall be abased, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted; therefore, how does it behoove us to keep little and lowly in our estimation, that we may escape the judgment of Him who plentifully rewardeth the proud and evil-doer, according to his deeds.

Let us, my dear friends, persist no longer in protesting our innocence, as individuals or parties in Society, but rather be willing to include ourselves among the transgressors of the holy law and commandment of God, confessing our faults one to another, and praying one for another, that we may be healed, lest we continue in envy and strife, to the begetting of confusion and every evil work; for these will surely follow the continuance in the spirit of separation, which is the bane of religious Society; and the indulgence therein, a reproach to the name of religion. If we will only be willing to "stand still and behold the salvation of God," He will, in his own time, work our deliverance, and bring us together again into the unity, harmony, and love which we once enjoyed, as a blessing from Him against whom we have offended. He will break down every wall of partition which the enemy of Zion's prosperity and peace has raised amongst us, and make us again one people, having but one Head and one end in view, and this, the glory and honor of his name, and the promotion of the coming of his kingdom in the earth. To Him, therefore, from every heart, be ascribed all glory and honor,

dominion and power, adoration and praise, not only in time, but throughout all eternity, for unto Him alone do they forever belong, who is the source of all true wisdom and goodness, light and grace, by which, through faith, we are saved with an everlasting salvation, of which He *alone* is the Author.

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qualified to understand the things of God, even that "the end of the commandment *is* charity, out of a *pure heart*, and of a *good conscience*, and of faith *unfeigned*; from which some, having served, have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm:" if it be so, that our profession has been thus reproached, and our testimony thus balked, by irregularity and ignorance, let us receive it as an evidence of our weakness and unfaithfulness, and not seek to cast the blame of our divisions and confusion where it does not belong, even *entirely* upon the introduction, adoption, and defence of objectionable views, or a quiet acquiescence in their adoption and spread; but rather acknowledge the share which the exercise of an unsanctified zeal, both upon the right hand and upon the left, has had in the occasion of them.

The present afflicted state of the Church has, no doubt, been permitted, to manifest unto us our weaknesses and our departures from primitive simplicity, faith, and purity, as well as to lead us back to the place of beginning, where prayer was wont to be made, in which the true believers were enabled to unite; desiring that the kingdom of God might come, and his will be done in our hearts, as it is in heaven; that through the instrumentality of his children, men might be turned unto righteousness; might be turned "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Christ;" for this was the mission which was given unto the Apostle, after he had witnessed the light from heaven to shine round about him, and had heard a voice speaking unto him, and saying, "Saul, Saul, *why* persecutest thou me?"

"Prayer is the vital breath of faith,  
Which makes the soul to heaven arise;  
Neglecting this the *man* may live,  
But oh! how soon the *Christian* dies."

Of the duty and necessity of inward and fervent prayer, no truly devoted Christian can be ignorant; for this is not